

Paul.

A. Webster.

S A I N T OR A B R U T E.

*The Certain Necessity and Excellency
of Holiness, &c. So plainly proved, and urgent-
ly applied, as by the blessing of God may convinate
and save the miserable, impenitent, ungodly Scepti-
cists, if they will not let the Devil hinder them from a
sober and serious reading and considering.*

*To be Communicated by the Charitable, that assist
Conversion and Salvation of souls, while the Privileges of
God, and the day of Grace and Hope continue.*

By Richard Baxter.

*The First Part : -
Shewing the Necessity of Holiness.*

London

for the Author



At Saint John's Bourse,
Mr. Richard Baxter, in 1662.



To my dearly beloved Friends, the Inhabitants of Kedermminster in W^{or}cester-shire ; and my late Auditors in the City of London: Confirming Grace, with Patience, Love and Peace be multiplied.

Dear Friends,

Once more, through the great mercy of God, I have liberty to send you a Preacher for your private families, which may speak to you (truly and plainly, though not elegantly) when I cannot, and when I lie silent in the dust. I take it for no small mercy that I have been so much employed about the Great

Necessary things, in despight of all the malice of Satan, who would have entangled me, and taken up my time, in personal vindications and barren controversies. As I never knew that I had one enemy in the world that ever was acquainted with me ; so those that know me, dissuading me from Apologies against the accusations of those that know me not, have spared my time for better work. Though there is about fifty writings (in whole or part) against me published, (by Infidels, Seekers, Familists, Enthusiasts, Quakers, Papists, Antinomians, Levellers, Covenant-breakers, State-subverters, Church-dividers, besides impatient dissenting Brethren, and Dependents that took it for the rising way), I yet find no cause (as to the present age, and those that know me) to be at any great care or pains for a defence ; while malicious lyes do but make men wonder, that wrinkled Envy should be so mad as to come so naked on the Stage, and shew her ugly deformities to the world, and could not stay at least till Wit had helpt her to a Cloak.

I was also when I first intended Writing under another temptation ; being of their mind that thought that nothing should be made publike, but what a man had first laid out his choicest

choiceſt art upon ; I thought to have acquaint-
ed the world with nothing but what was the
work of *Time* and *Diligence* : But my conſci-
ence ſoon told me, that there was too much of
Pride and Selfiſhneſs in this ; and that *Humility*
and *Self-denyal* required me to lay by the affecta-
tion of that ſtyle, and ſpare that induſtrie, which
tended but to advance my name with men,
when it hindred the main work, and croſt my
end : And Proyidence drawing forth ſome
popular unpoliſhed Discouſes, and giving
them ſucess beyond my expeſtation, did there-
by rebuke my ſelfiſh thoughts, and ſatisfie me
that the *Truths of God* do perform their work
more by their *Divine Authority*, and proper *Evi-
dence*, and material *Excellency*, than by any orna-
ments of *fleſhly wiſdom* : and (as *Seneca* ſaith)
though I will not diſpife an elegant *Physicion* ;
yet will I not think my ſelf much the happyer,
for his adding eloquence to his healing art.
Being encouraged then by *Reason* and *Experi-
ence*, I venture theſe popular Sermons into the
world ; and especially for the uſe of you, my
late Auditors, that heard them. I bleſs God
that, when more worthy Labourers are ſain to
weep over their obſtinate, unprofitable, un-
thankful people, and ſome are driven away by

their injuries, and put to shake off the dust of their feet against them; I am rather forced to weep over my own unthankful heart, that did not sufficiently value the mercy of a faithful flock, who parted with me rather as the *Ephesians* with *Paul*, *Acts 20.* and who have lived according to this *Plain and Necessary* doctrine which they have received: Among whom Papists, that perswade men that our doctrine tendeth to divisions, can find no divisions or sects: Who have constantly disowned both the *Ambitious usurpations* which have shaken the *Kingdom*; and the *Factions*, *Censoriousness*, and cruel violence in the *Church*, which *Pride* hath generated and nourished in this trying Age. Among whom I have enjoyed so very large a proportion of mercy, in the liberty of so long an exercise of my Ministry, with so unusual advantage and success, that I must be disingenuously unthankfull if I should murmur and repine at the present restraining hand of God: But I must say with *David*, *2 Sam. 15. 25.* [If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again and shew me the *Ark* and habitation (There or elsewhere use me in his service): But if he say, I have no delight in thee, behold here I am, let him do to me as it seemeth good unto him.

And

And now with this Treatise, let me leave you these few seasonable requests.

1. Be faithful to your faithful Pastors : Think not that you can live in *order* and *safety* without their Ministry. When you can, attend their *publike Ministry* ! Refuse not their *more private help* : Read well my two sheets for the Ministry : Where the *lawful Pastor* is, there the *Church* is : Be not either *impiously indifferent* in your worshipping of God, or *peevishly quarrelsome* with what is commanded or practised by others, nor disobedient to Authority in lawful things.

2. Maintain still your antient Love and Unity and Peace among your selves, and improve your company and converse to the advantage of your souls. Be daily interlocutory preachers to one another : Speak as the *Oracles of God* ; and Preach by a holy, patient, harmless, charitable and heavenly life. This kind of Preaching none can silence but your own corruptions.

3. Improve the profitable books which are among you. 1. Read them frequently, and reverently, and seriously to your families ; when you have called them together, and prayed for God's blessing. 2. Carry them abroad with you,

you, and when you fall into company where you cannot better spend your time, read to them some seasonable passages of such writings.

3. Give or Lend them to those that need, and want either *Purses* or *Hearts* to provide them; and get them to promise you to read them, and enquire after the success. By such improvement Books may become such *Seconds* or *Substitutes* to publike preaching, as that they may not be the least support of Religion and means to mens edification and salvation.

4. Make special and diligent provision to satisfie your selves and others against Popery, which is like to be none of the least of your temptations. To this end, I pray you read well the *single sheet against Popery* which I published, and give of them abroad to others where there is need: Read also my other books against it: (*My Safe Religion*, and *Key for Catholicks*, and *Dispute with Mr. Johnson*), and Dr. *Challoner's Credo Sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam*: And when their sophistry puzzleth you, 1. Call your able Pastors to debate it. 2. And remember that they have the *Scripture*, and the far greater part of the *universal Church*, and the *senses* of all the world to confute, before they can make good the cause their of ambitious Clergy.

Clergy. If you are but sure you know Bread and Wine when you see, and feel, and smell, and taste them, then you are at the end of controversie with the Papists. Above all, see that you maintain the Love of God, and a heavenly mind, and mortified affections, and grow not opinionative, superficial or loose in your Religion: For he that is heartily of no Religion, is prepared to be of any Religion: And it is because men are false to the acknowledged Truth, that they are given up to make a Religion of deceit and falsehood: Your fidelity to your King and Countrey, obligeth you to do your part to preserve the subjects from a disease so injurious to them. Saith Dr. Sherman in his late [Account of Faith] against the Papist, Pres. p. 4, 5. [If Kings would think upon it, there might be no Popes; since if Popes could well help it, there should be no Kings.]

5. Take heed of all temptations to turbulency, resisting of Authority, or other unlawfull means in the obeying of your passions or discontents. As God chose most eminently to Glorifie his Power under the Law of Works, and the spirit of bondage to fear did much prevail; but under the Gospel he hath chosen most eminently to magnifie his Goodness, Love and Mercy; so ac-

cordingly is the *impress* made upon his servants hearts: They are *animated by Love*, for the *propagating of Love*; and therefore must work with *Instruments of Love*. And if we had well learnt the *Doctrine* and *Example* of our *Lord*, and made it our *work to Love all*, and to *do good to all*, and *hurt to none*, and with *meekness* and *patience* to let any hurt us, rather then do any thing for our own *defence*, which is *against the Law of Love*, we should see that *Christianity* would better *thrive*, when it would be *better understood* by the *practice* of the *professors*. Often have I noted that a whole flock of *sheep* will run away from the *smallest dog*, and yet there is *few* of them killed by *dogs*, because they are under their *Masters care*; when a *Woolf* or *Fox* is pursued by all, and *few* of them suffered to live. And oft have I observed, that when men that *shift* for themselves can scarce pass the *streets*, yet *children* play in the *way* of *Carts* and *Coaches* without *hurt*, while every one takes it for his *care to preserve them*, that cannot take care of and *preserve themselves*. And though the *Deer* that is within the *Park* is killed when the *Owner* please, yet he is *preserved* therefrom *others*, when the *wild and stragling Deer* that are abroad, are *aprey to any man* that can *catch or kill them*.

He

He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth it for Christ shall save it.

The Lord stablish, strengthen, direct, and preserve you to his Kingdom, and keep you from the passions of corrupted nature, and from the snares and rage of a deceitful and malicious world; I beseech you continue yet your prayers for him that desireth no greater advancement in the world, than to be

The servant of Christ, and

June 7. 1662.

Helper of your Joy,

Rich. Baxter,

(a 2)

The



The Contents.

Part I.

P Reface : The contempt of Godliness rebuked,	pag. 1
Godliness described : What it containeth; and what I mean by Godliness throughout this Treatise,	p. 5
Signs of true Godliness,	p. 14
Directions for such as will be soundly and sincerely godly,	p. 18

L uke 10. 41, 42. The design of the Treatise,	p. 1
The Text explained,	p. 3, &c.
1. Obs. Nearest natural relations are not always of one mind in the matters of salvation,	p. 8
2. Obs. When Christ cometh into the house, he is presently at work for the hearers souls,	p. 8
3. Obs. When the word is preached we must hear,	p. 9
4. Obs. The humility of Disciples in those times.	ib.
The sense of the Text in seven Doctrines,	p. 10
Doct. I. One thing is Needful : It is One thing that is absolutely Necessary; but they busie themselves about many, that neglect this one,	p. 11
In what respect it is One, and but One,	ibid.
How the troubling matters of the world are many,	p. 13
How far the One thing is Necessary,	p. 15
Q. Are not other things Needful in their places?	p. 18
The Application I. by way of inquiry, how you have sought the One thing Necessary,	p. 20
How a true Christian differeth from all hypocrites,	p. 22
I. What	

The Contents.

11 Whatever you have been doing in the world, you have but lost your Time, if you have not done the One thing Needful,	p. 25
2. And you have lost all your labour,	p. 26
3. You have been busily undoing your selves,	p. 29
4. You have unman'd your selves, and lived below your Reason, and as beside your wits,	p. 32
The madness of them that are afraid of being Godly, lest it make them mad,	p. 34
5. You have but abused and lost all your mercies,	p. 37, 38
6. You have neglected Christ, his Grace and Spirit,	p. 40
7. Your hopes and peace are but delusions and irrational,	p. 41
Use 2. To lament the distracted course of worldlings,	p. 43
Use 3. Exhortation : What course will you take for time to come?	p. 48
Consider 1. It is Necessity that is pleaded with you,	p. 51
2. It is but One thing that God hath made Necessary,	p. 56
3. This One thing is that Good part,	p. 59
4. This Good part is offered you, and you have your choice, whether God or the world, heaven or earth shall be your portion,	p. 61
Qn. How is it in our choice? have we free-will?	p. 63
5. If you choose it, it shall never be taken from you.	p. 65
A full confutation of those ungodly ones that deny the Necessity of a holy life, p. 69. in 30 Queries.	
Obj. It is not Godliness, but your precise way that we call needless.	
The particulars of a holy life examined, p. 83. 1. Much preaching and hearing;	p. 83
2. Reading Scriptures, 3. and fervent Prayer,	p. 86
3. Diligent instructing families,	p. 88
4. The holy observation of the Lords Day justified,	p. 89
7. Strictness of life in avoiding sin,	p. 92
8. The rigour of Church-Discipline,	p. 94
Obj. It is but few that are so strict.	p. 97

The second Part.

Chap. 1. Holiness and its fruits are the Best part: Wherein the Happiness of Saints consisteth, p. 101. Why most men choose it not. What is set in the Balance against it, p. 110

The excuses of refusers answered,

(a 3),

Pal 12
Chap.

The Contents:

Chap. 2. What he must do in reason, that will be resolved which is the best part and way : And who shall be the judge. p. 114

Chap. 3. Twenty Queries for the full conviction of all Rational men, that are willing to understand the truth, that There is a Life to come of Happiness to the Godly, and Misery to the Ungodly: With fifteen Queries for the conviction of Infidels, that the Gospel is the infallible Word of God, p. 130

[Those that have not read the second Part of my Saines Rest, and Treatise against Infidelity, and doubt of the Truth of the Scripture or the life to come, may read this third Chapter first, and so proceed to the rest of the Book.]

Clem. Writer's Objections answered, p. 157

Chap. 4. Holiness is Best for all Societies, p. 159

1. It uniteth all in One head and Center, p. 160

2. It hath the most uniting, excellent, powerful end of duty, p. 161

3. It takes away the Ball of the world's contention that breaketh Societies, ibid.

4. It destroyeth selfishness, which is the destroying principle, p. 162

5. It hath the most righteous Laws, ibid.

6. It is contrary to all disturbing evil, ibid.

7. It effectually disposeth the mind to duty, p. 163

8. It cleanseth the very heart, and killeth secret sin. 9. It commeth Societies with unfeigned Love, ibid.

10. It maketh Princes and Rulers a double blessing : Manifested in five particulars, p. 164

11. It maketh the most Loyal and obedient subjects. For 1. it makes them know themselves. p. 166. 2. And to see God in their Rulers. 3. And to obey and submit for conscience sake, p. 167. 4. And destroyeth self-seeking. 5. And consisteth in Charity. 6. Procureth Divine blessings. 7. And makes men weak, and patient, and forbearing. 8. Disposeth to concord. 9. Assureth of the greatest rewards of obedience. 10. And confirmeth against all temptations to disobedience, p. 168

Object. Have not the greatest rebellions been caused by your godly men? as the Waldenses, Bohemians, French and others nearer us? Answered, p. 169, 170. specially to Papists, p. 173, 174

12. Godliness maketh men true to their Covenants, ibid.

13. It teacheth the true method of obeying, p. 175

14. It maketh men of publike spirits. 15. It maketh it their busi-
ness to do good. 16. It makes men love enemies, and forgive wrongs.

The Contents.

wrongs. 17. It interesteth Societies in the favour and protection of God,	p. 176
18. It is the surest way to all supplies. 19. It is the Honour of So- cieties. 20. It must be best that is so heavenly;	p. 177
Chap. 5. Times of Holiness are the Best Times, p. 178. Those that say, It never was a good world since there was so much Godlessness, and so much preaching, are fully confuted by twenty Argu- ments. And their cavils answered.	p. 181, &c.
Chap. 6. Holiness is the only way of safety,	p. 196
Chap. 7. Holiness is the only Honest way. The dishonesty of the ungodly proved,	p. 205
Chap. 8. Holiness is the most Gainsful way proved,	p. 219
Chap. 9. Holiness is the most Honourable way, p. 232. A reproof of the reproach of Holiness in England: And full proof of the Honour of a Godly life,	ibid.
Obj. It tends to make the godly proud to tell them of their Honour. Answ. Many Reasons for full confutation of this Objection, p. 258	
The baseness of the ungodly,	p. 265
Chap. 10. Holiness is the most Pleasant life,	p. 269
Proved: 1. From the Nature of the thing, and 2. From the Rever- lations of God, and the Knowledge of Believers,	p. 270
2. From the Will and Affections, the nature and operations of Grace therein,	p. 277
3. From the quality of External holy duties,	p. 282
4. From the Objects of holy Acts,	p. 302, 303
Objections answered,	p. 307, 308
11. From the Helps and Concomitants,	p. 310
From the Effects,	p. 312
The Aggravations of the Delights of Holiness compared with the Delights of sin,	p. 314
Obj. Of the sad lives of Believers, Answered,	p. 323
Obj. Dost not God command men to fast and mourn?	p. 339
Use: Reproof to those that can find no matter of pleasure in a holy life,	p. 341
The greatness of their sin and misery,	p. 342
Directions, Shewing such graceless persons what to do, that they may come to Delight in God and Godliness,	p. 348
Use 2. Reproof to those self troubling Christians, who live as sadly as if there were little pleasure to be found in God,	p. 353
Considerations fit to cure this sad disease,	p. 354

The Contents.

Qn. Whether it be not Hypocritical affectation, to seem conformable for fear of discouraging men from Religion : Fully answered,	
	p. 359
Obj. I could rejoice if I knew my title to the promises,	p. 362
Obj. I have cause of sorrow,	p. 363
The considerations prosecuted,	p. 364
Twelve Directions to sad self-troubling Christians, how they may live a joyful life, and find Delight in God and Godliness, p. 374.	

Errata.

PAg. 277. lin. ult. for Law read Love ; p. 357. l. 5. for that once r. but once ;
l. 7. r. fermentations ; l. ult. r. sweeter ; p. 358. l. 30. for unanswered r.
answerable ; p. 367. l. 23. r. Physician ; l. 38. after of r. in ; p. 374. l 17.
for is r. are ; p. 375. l. 37. blot out when ; p. 381. l. 37. r. terrors.
Smaller literall errors and mispointings being not many I omit.



THE INTRODUCTION.

To all such as neglect, dislike, or quarrel at a life of true and serious Godliness.

IT hath been the matter of my frequent admiration, How it can be consistent with the Natural self-love, and Reasonableness of man-kind, and the special ingenuity of some above others, for men to believe [that they must die, and after live in endless Joy or misery, according to their preparations in this life,] and yet to make no greater a matter of it, nor set themselves with all their might to enquire what they must be and do if they will be saved, but to make as great a busyness and bustle to have their Wills and Pleasure for a little while, in the small impertinent matters of this world, as if they had neither hopes or fears of any greater things hereafter. That as some ungodly persons are *cetera sani*, as rational as other men in all matters saving some one, in which yet their delusions

maketh them the jests or derision of observers ; so many that have wit enough to avoid fire and water , and to go out of the way from a wild beast or a mad man , yet have not the wit to avoid damnation , nor to preferre eternal life before a merry passage unto hell : Yea that some that account themselves ingenuous , and men of a deeper reach then the unlearned , can see no further through the promises or threatenings of God , then through a Prospective or a Tube ; and have no wit that looketh beyond a grave ; yea are ready to smile at the simplicity of those that care whether they live in Heaven or Hell , and use but as much diligence for their salvation , as they use themselves for that which Paul accounted dung .

Many a time I have wondered how the Devil can thus abuse a man of reason , and such as think themselves no fools ! and how such unexpressible dotage can stand with either learning , ingenuity , or common understanding ; and what shift the Devil and these men make to keep them from seeing that have eyes , or from seeing the Heavens , that can see the smallest dust or atome . But my admiration is abated when I consider , that the wit that serveth to move a poppet , is not enough to Rule a Kingdom ; and that sleeping Reason is as none ; and that it is the very art and busyness of the Devil to charm sinners to sleep and wake at once . Dormire Deo , at mundo vigilare : to be asleep to God , and awake to the world : And what present things engage the sensles , and call off Reason from its work : And that the seeming distance of the life to come , occasioneth the neglect of stupid half-believing souls , till they find it is indeed at hand : even as Death though certain , affecteth few in youth and beulth , as it doth when they perceive that they must presently be gone : And withall , that a man is not a man in act till he be considerate : and that it is no good be w thout eyes , as full to wink . We know what detained our selves so long in sleep and folly , and we know what makes us yet so slow : and therefore

therefore we may know what it is that thus unmanneth others.

Reader, if then be one of these unhappy souls ; Whether thy brain be so sick as really to think that there is no life to come for man , or that there needs no such care and diligence to prepare for it ; or whether thy heart be so corrupt and bad as to be against the things which thou confessest to be Good and Necessary ; or whether thy Reason be cast so fast asleep , as never soberly to consider of the only thing of everlasting consequence and concernment to thy self ; or whether thy Heart be grown so dead and stupid , as to be past feeling , and never moved and affected with the things which thou hearest , and knowest , and considerest to be so great and necessary ; which ever of these be thy sad condition , I have now this one request to thee , as a friend that truly desirous thy salvation is and I tender it rather with as earnest a desire , as if thou sawest me upon my knees entreating thee for the Lords sake , and for thy souls sake , and as ever thou hopest for the comfort of a dying man , and as ever thou carest what becomes of thy soul for ever , and as ever thou wilt answer it to Christ and thy own conscience with peace at last , that then neither chany me , nor put me off with a careless reading , nor with contempt or disregard : My request to thee is but this reasonable thing ; [That thou wilt so long make a stand in thy way , and grant me so much of thy time , as once to read throughout this Treatise , and S. J. 10. 5. L. to C O N S I D E R of what thou Readest , and heartily to beg of God upon thy knees , to teach thee and lead thee into the truth , and then to be true to God and to thy Conscience , and Resolvedly to do that which thou art convinced is Right , and Best , and Necessary .] This is all my request to thee as the preface : Put me not off with a despisal or neglect , as thou wilt answer it to God , and as thou wilt not be a wilful self-condemner : Hast thou given someth

hours and dayes in vain, and cannot I beg a few hours of thee, to Read and Think of thy Everlasting State ? If thou darest not Read and Think of what can be said about such things as these, it is a sign thy case is indeed so bad, that thou hast more need then others to Read and Think of them. I know the Devil dare not give thee leave to do it, if he can binder thee, for fear lest thy eyes should be opened to see, and thy heart awakened to feel, the things which he so laboureth to keep away from thy sight and feeling, till it be too late : And willst thou grant him his desire to thy damnation, or Christ and his servants their desire to thy salvation ? Think of it well before thou answer it by word or deed.

Being in hope that thou hast granted my request (to Read, Consider, Pray for help, and faithfully do what God shall teach thee) I shall now begin to open thee the way to the matter of this Treatise : The summe of my busyness is to teach thee, I Tim. 4. 8. that [bodily exercise (in Religion) profiteth little, but Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.] I think it meet therefore to tell thee here in the beginning [What Godliness is] which the Apostle distinguisheth from [bodily exercise] in matters of Religion, and which I have proved so Necessary and Excellent in this Treatise. And this I must do, 1. lest thou deceive thy soul by taking something else for Godliness ; 2. and lest thou lose thy labour in the Reading of this Book, and hearing what Scripture and Preachers say for Godliness ; and 3. lest thou wrong me and thy self (according to the custom of this malitious age) by imagining that by Godliness, I mean either Superstition, or Hypocrisie, or Schism, or that I am persuading thee to sedition, humor, or needless singularity, under the name of Godliness and Religion. I shall therefore tell you distinctly here, What Godliness is indeed ; and What it is not.

In General GODLINESS is our DEVOTEDNESS TO GOD. And all these things following are Essential to it, and of indispensable Necessity to salvation.

1. That materially it contain these three things.

1. The true internal Principle, Soul and Life of Godliness; which is the Spirit of God, Rom. 8. 9. The Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. The new, and soft, and single heart, Jer. 33. 39. Ezek. 11. 19. The seed of God abiding in us, 1 John 3. 9.

2. The Intention of the true ends of Godliness: which is the Reward in Heaven, Matth. 5. 11, 12. Luke 18. 22. Matth. 6. 20, 21. Rom. 8. 17, 18. The Pleasing of God and the Beatifical Vision and fruition of him with Christ and his triumphant Church in the New Jerusalem for ever.

3. The Reception and Observation of the true Rule of Godliness: which is [the Will of God revealed partly in Nature, and fully in the Holy Scriptures:] This must be in our very hearts, Psalm 37. 31. Jer. 31, 33. and with delight we must meditate in it day and night, Psalm 1. 2. To cast away and despise the Law of God, is the brand of the rebellious, Isa. 5. 24.

2. It is Essential to Godliness that it formally contain these three Relations.

1. It is a Devotedness of our selves to HIS OWN to GOD as our OWNER, or Proprietary, or Lord; quitting all pretence to any co-ordinate title to ourselves, and resigning our selves absolutely (and all that we have) to him that by the right of Creation and Redemption is our Lord, Psal. 100. 3. & 119. 94. Job. 17. 6.

2. Godliness containeth a Devotedness of our selves as Subjects to God as our Supream and Absolute Governor, to rule us by his Laws, his Officers and his Spirit. (b 3).

up our selves to be Ruled by him as our King : to Learn of him as our Teacher ; to work for him as our Master : to fight under him and follow him as our Captain and Commander, Isa. 63. 19. & 9. 6. Luk. 19. 27. &c.

3. Godliness containeth a Devotedness of our selves as Beneficiaries to God in Christ as our Great Benefactor, in Love and Gratitude. Or as Children to our Reconciled Father to Love him and thankfully obey him, and depend on him, and be happy in his Love.

3. It is essential to Godliness and necessary to salvation that this Devotedness to God, be with a true Renunciation, Resistance, and Forsaking of the three great contraries or Enemies to God and us :

1. Of the Devil as the Deceiver and Principle of wickedness.

2. Of the world (its Profits, Honours, and Pleasures) as the baite by which the Devil would deceive us, and steal away our hearts from God, and take up our time, and turn our thoughts from the one thing necessary.

3. Of the Flesh, as the rebelling faculty that would exalt it self above our Reason, and be pleased before God, and so would take its Pleasure as our felicity and End, instead of the true felicity and End.

4. It is Essential to Godliness subjectively, that God have the preheminence above all Creatures, 1. In the Habitual Estimation of our Judgements, preferring him as the most Great, and Wise, and Good, before all others. 2. In the Wills habitual Consent and Choice, refusing all in comparison of him, and Choosing him as our Lord, our Ruler, and our Best, and Consenting truly to the Relations in which he is offered to us. 3. In the Wills Resolution to seek him and obey him, and endeavour to express these inward principles, so as to prefer no competitor before him.

5. The Soul or Internal part of Godliness consisting Essentially in the things already mentioned, the Body of it, or Godliness expressive and visible consisteth in these three things.

1. In our Covenant with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; our Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier; our Owner, Governour, and Father (or Benefactor.) It is essential to visible expressive Godliness, that there be such a Covenant made: and regularly it is to be solemnized by Baptisme: And those that are Baptized in Infancie, must necessarily renew, and perform it themselves when they come to age, and that understandingly, deliberately, freely, and seriously.

2. Godliness visible and expressive consisteth in our Profession of that devotedness to God, and that forsaking of the Devil, the world, and the flesh, which we have before described as the Essence of Internal Godliness, and to which in the holy Covenant we oblige our selves. Christ will be confessed before men, and will be ashamed of them before God and Angels, who are so far ashamed of him before men, as ordinarily to refuse to own him and confess him. The publike worshiping of God in Christ, in Prayer, Thanksgiving, Praises, Sacrament, is appointed as the Professings acts, by which we openly own our Lord: And therefore ordinarily the Assembling our selves together for this publike worship is not to be forsaken, through negligence or fear; but with Daniel we must pray though we are sure to be cast to the Lyons den; For though no duty be at all times a duty, yet the disowning of our God, or denying him, or being ashamed of him; or immediately afraid of man, is at all times a sin: and ordinarily and reasonably so profers true Godliness, our subjection and devotedness to God, is essential to External Godliness.

3. Visible Expressive Godliness doth essentially consist in the Practice of our fore-described Covenant and Profession: That our faces be truly Heaven-wards, and that our walk be in the way of God, through we sometimes slip and stumble and if we step aside, that we turn not back again, but return by Repentance in our way: that the drift and aime, and bent of our lives, be for God and our salvation: and that there be in us no sin, which truly and habitually we had not rather leave then keep: And that our great business in the world be the pleasing of God, and the saving of our souls: and that neither Honours, nor Profits, nor Pleasures of the flesh, have the preheminence, and be preferred: that Christ be not put under the Great ones of the world, nor put after your commodity, nor put off with the leavings of the flesh, but that all be made to stoop to him, and take his leavings: All this is of necessity to salvation, and essential to expressive Godliness.

By this time Reader thou mayst easily see, 1. that Godliness is not an uneffectual opinion, or dead belief; If thou were the most Orthodox professour, or Preacher in the world, thou art ungodly if thou have no more. All have not Faith that say the Creed; The notional apprehension, and the practical judgement are often contrary; The opinion that is insufficient to change the Heart, to move the will, to renew the life, shall prove insufficient to save the Soul.

2. You may see that Godliness is not the adhearing to a Party, though such a Party as pretendeth to some special excellency, or calls it self the only Church, or the purest Church. It is a sin to make and cherish parties, divisions, and factions in the Universal Church, and it is not Godliness to sin. A Godly man through weakness may be of a sinful party, but that is contrary to his Godliness. He will worship God with his best, and be where he may

may have best advantage to his Soul, and therefore if he can, will hold personal local communion with the best and purest congregations ; but not as separating from the rest, and betaking himself to a Party set against the Church universal, or a Party sinfully distant from others in the Church universal. The grand design of the Devil is, when men will needs look after Religion, to make them believe that to be of such a Church, or Party, is to be Religious, and to trust to that instead of Godliness for the saving of their Souls. And carnal self-seeking Teachers are the principal instruments of this deceit ; who for their honour or commodity would draw away Disciples after them, and make poor Souls believe that they must be their followers, or of their side, or opinion, or Church, if they will be saved : The Papist saith, You must follow the Pope, and be of our Church, or you are no true Catholicks, nor in the true Church, and cannot be saved : And some other Sects say the like of their Churches. And how many thousand ungodly wretches do think to be saved, because they are such a Church or party. But the Catholick or Universal Church, is the whole company of Believers Headed only by Christ : and Godliness must prove thee a Living member of this society, unless thou wilt be burnt with the withered branches : And God will never condemn any one that is truly Godly, because he is not of this sect or party, or of that : And the Papists that are the most notorious sect and grand dividers of the Church, and condemmers of the justified, shall know one day, that Ambition was not true Religion ; and that the name of unity, and universality and Antiquity, were unmeet instruments to be used to the destruction of Unity, and contradiction of Universality and Antiquity ; and that God hath set apart himself the man that is Godly, though the Accuser of the Brethren would cast such out, Psal. 4. 3. And who shall condemn when it is Christ that justifieth ? Rom. 8. 33.

You may see now, that Godliness is not any meer external act or worship : External worship there must be, and that with all decencie and reverent behaviour : but it is hypocrisie if there be nothing but the Corps without the Internal Godliness which is the life and soul. Bodily exercise is here by the Apostle distinct from Godliness.

4. You may now see that Godliness is not the meer forbearance of the outward acts or practice of any sin. For else a sleep, or a prison might make a man Godly by restraining him from the acts of sin : He is ungodly that had rather live in the sin which through some restraint he doth forbear. If you would do it, you have done it, in Gods account.

5. You may see also that whatsoever Religiousness, Obedience, or Endeavours subject Christ to the flesh and world, and make him give place to them and come behind, do not deserve the name of Godliness. You are not Godly, how far soever else you goe, if God and your Salvation take not place before all the honours, profits and pleasures of the world. As he is not God that hath any Greater, Wiser or Better then himself; so that is not Godliness which giveth the precedency practically to any thing but God : that pretendeth never so highly to Honour him, and yet more esteemeth their own Honour with the world : or that professeth Love and Obedience to him, and yet Loveth and obeyeth a Lust before him, and sets more by Love and Obedience to themselves, then by their own or other mens Love or Obedience to God. All these are the cheating counterfeits of Godliness.

6. And if none of these be Godliness, much lesse doth it consist in any sin : in superstition, Idolatry, or in cruelty, blood and persecution through a carnal zeal : in a bringing all others by violence to our proud impious wills : in murmuring, sedition, rebellion, or resisting lawfull Powers, under pretence of propagating religion : Godliness consisteth not in

in Jesuitical contrivances, and undermining others, and equivocations and pious frauds : in disturbing Kingdoms, killing Kings, blowing up Parliaments : absolving subjects from allegiance, and giving away the Dominions of Temporal Lords if they will not obey the Pope in exterminating their Hereticks, (as is Decreed to be done in the Approved General Council at the Laterane under Innocent 3. Can. 3.) nor doth it consist in murdering thirty thousand or fourty thousand treacherously in a few weeks, as in France, or much above twice as many in Ireland ; nor in butchering Christians by hundreds or thousands as they did long agoe by the Waldenses and Albigenses, and Bohemians : Nor in racking and tormenting them by Inquisition, nor in frying them in the flames of fagots, as in Queen Maries days, and frequently elsewhere : This is the Religion of the father of malice, that thirsts for blood, and not of the Merciful Prince of Peace. Godliness is not the running to arms, and pulling down Governments, to set up the proud self-conceited actors under pretence of setting up Christ and preparing for his Kingdom: snatching in their dreams at Crowns and Kingdoms, and finding when they awake that they have caught a gallows. When the Fryers had spawned the turbulent people among us in England, that thought they must do any thing and overturn the Governments of the world to make Christ the fifth Monarch, and bring him from heaven to Reign visibly on earth before he is willing to come, I must confess I oft thought that their cunning was much more wonderful to keep these people from being undeceived, then at first to deceive them. To keep them (in despite of all our discoveries and warnings) in such furious blindness, as to goe on and do their fathers work, and rage against these that told them their original, and whither they were going. The poor seduced people never read such Books as Fryar Campanella's de Regno Dei, & Iacobus Christi, &c.

wherein he brings up all the Prophetical Texts in Isaiah, Daniel, &c. which these men use, and labouresh to shew what a golden Age is coming, in which divisions shall cease, and unity become the strength and beauty of the world, and this by the Universal reign of Christ: and what a happy people the Saints will be, and how they shall then judge and rule the world (and, O the comfort! the time is near;) and just such words be useth for his fifth most glorious universal Monarchy, as others now do: But when all comes to all, the mysterie unveiled is but this; that Christ must reign by the Pope his Deputy; and that all Princes and Nations must submit and stoop; and their Kingdoms must all become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, to be governed by his Deputy the Pope: and (the power falsely called spiritual, being first well-settled) the other Key or sword also (the temporal) must for unity sake be put into the same hand: The Heavens therefore should rejoice, and the earth be glad, for the Lord thus cometh to judge the world: The fifth Monarchy is at hand: The Universal holy reign of Christ, not by prophane Princes, but by his Holiness the Pope, and by the Saints (the Fryars, Jesuites, Monks, and Clergy) that shall judge the world, to whom ere long all knees shall bow.

But you will say, We are so far from joyning with these Fryars, that we hate the Pope much more then you do. I answer, You have received their frame of doctrine of the Universal fifth Monarchy that is at hand: there is but one thing to do, and you are theirs, which is to convince you that Christ is not to come and reign here personally, but by his Great Vicegerent. And they that could bring you to believe things more improbable, may more easily easily bring you to them from your unreasonable conceit.

Pardon this Digression; I thought meet to tell you that Godliness lyeth not in breaking the Law of God, nor in obeying Pride, nor being the enemies of Government and order.

in the world, nor in an impatient striving by right or wrong, to break away from the yoke of suffering, that God for our sin (or for his cause) shall lay upon us. And now I have fully and distinctly told you, What Godliness is, and What it is not.

And now go thy way, malicious soul, and say, if thou dare, (as the Devils informers frequently do) that it is sedition, or faction, or schism, or disobedience, that we draw the people to under the name of Godliness : Hold on if thou wilt a little longer in such impudent calumnies against me and other Ministers of Christ : But know that thy day is coming, and that for all these things thou shalt come to judgement ; and if thou justifie the ungodly, yet remember, that [It is not good to have respect of persons in judgement ; and he that saith to the wicked, Thou art Righteous ; the people shall curse him, Nations shall abhor him.] Prov. 24. 23, 24. [He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.] Prov. 17. 15. [Wo unto them that call Evil Good, and Good Evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter — which justifie the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him : therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as the dust, because they have cast away the Law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word of the holy one of Israel.] Isa. 5. 20, 23, 24. Let the malicious serpent accuse Job before God, in the end it shall turn to his own confusion. And if any of the Princes of the earth, will by Doegs be provoked to destroy the Priests, or by jealousy kindled by malicious whisperers, be incited so do by the servants of Christ, as they did by the Waldenses, Babenians, Protestants in many

places, &c. we will remember the memorable words of David, 1 Sam. 26. 18, 19. and let the sufferers imitate him in the submissive part, [Wherefore doth my Lord pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in my hand? Now therefore I pray thee let my Lord the King hear the words of his servant: If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if it be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go serve other Gods] (By going where they are served.)

Having fully shewed you [What Godliness is] I now beseech thee, Reader, to enquire, Whether this described case be thine? Art thou Devoted to God without reserve, as being not thine own but his? And hast thou devoted all thou hast to him with thy self, to be used according to his Will? Art thou mere subjected to his Authority, and observant of his Laws and Government, then of mans? and can his word do more with thee, even the word of any mortal man, or then the violence of thy lusts and passions? Art thou heartily engaged to him as thy felicity, and dost thou give up thy self to him in filial Love, dependance and observance, as to thy dearest friend and Father? Dost thou highly esteem him, and resolvedly choose him, and sincerely seek him, preferring nothing in thy Estimation, Choice, Resolution, or Endeavour before him? Try by these and the other particulars in the Description, whether you are Godly or ungodly; and do it faithfully; for the day is at hand, when the ungodly shall not stand in judgement, nor sinners in the Assembly of the just, Psal. 1. 5.

And besides the marks expressed in the description, let me offer you some from the plain words of the Texts, that you may

you see what God accounteth Godliness, and consequently how to judge your selves.

1. In John 3. 3, 5, 6. it is written, Verily except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God — That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.] 2 Cor. 5. 17. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.] Rom. 8. 9. If any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his.]

From these Texts you see, that a heart and life made new by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, is absolutely necessary to true godliness.

2. Psalm 119. 5. O that my wayes were directed to keep thy Statutes.] Rom. 7. 18. To will is present with me.] Psalm 73. 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth, &c.] Isa. 26. 8. The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.]

From these and such like texts it is evident, that [The principal desires of a godly man, and the choice of his will, is to be what God would have him be.]

3. Psalm 1. 2. His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night. 1 Pet. 2. 2. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.] Luke 10. 42.

From these and such like Texts it is manifest, [That all the Godly do Love the Word of God, as the food of their souls, and the director of their lives.]

4. Matth. 6. 20, 21, 33. Lay up for your selves a treasure in heaven, &c. For where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also: Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness.] Matth. 7. 13. Luke 13. [Enter in at the strait gate — strive to enter in —

for

for many shall seek and shall not be able.] 2 Pet. 1. 10.
Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.]
Rom. 12. 11.

From these and such texts you may discern, that [Godliness consisteth in such diligence for salvation, as to seek it before any earthly thing, and not to think the labour of a holy life too much for it.]

5. Rom. 8. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13. Gal. 5. 18, 19. Read them and you will see that [Godliness consisteth in living after the spirit, and not after the flesh, and in mortifying the deeds of the body by the spirit, living not by sensuality, but by Faith.]

6. John 3. 19, 20. [And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil: For every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved: but he that doth truth cometh to the light, &c.] 1 King. 21. 7, 8: And the King of Israel said to Zebosaphat, there is yet one man (Micaiah) by whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesie good concerning me, but evil: And Zebosaphat said, Let not the King say so.]

From these and such like Texts you see, that [The Godly love the discovering light, and the most searching faithful preacher; but the ungodly cannot endure the light which sheweth them their sins, nor love the Preachers that tell them of their sin and misery.]

7. 1 Cor. 13. John 13. 35. By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if you love one another.] 1 John 3. 14. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the Brethren.] Psal. 15. 4. [In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.

From these, and such like texts, it is evident, that [All that are truly Godly, have a special Love to those that are Godly: they love and honour Christ in his Image on his Saints.]

8. *Acts* 2. 42. & 4. 32. You may see, that [The Godly love the Communion of Saints, to joyn with them in holy doctrine, fellowship and prayers.]

9. *1 Thes.* 5. 17. Pray continually] *Luke* 18. 1. Christ spake a Parable to them to this end, that men ought alwayes to pray, and not to wax faint.] *Acts* 9. 11. Behold he prayeth.] *Zecl.* 12. 10. I will pour out — the spirit of prayer and supplication —] *Rom.* 8. 26. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what to pray for as we ought, &c.]

From all these, and such like it is evident, that [Prayer is the breath of a Godly man: he is a man of Prayer: When he wanteth words, he bath desires with tears or groans.]

10. *Mattb.* 15. 8, 9. This people draweth near me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me —] *John* 4. 23, 24. God is Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and truth.]

From such texts it is evident that [Every Godly man doth make the inward exercise of his soul the principal part of his worship unto God, and doth not stick in bodily exercise, or lip service.]

11. *Josh.* 24. 15. As for me and my household, we wil serve the Lord.] So *Deut.* 6. & 11. & *1 Pet.* 2. 17, 18. & 3. 10. & *Eph.* 5. & 6.

From many such Texts it is evident, that Godly men desire the sanctification of others, and make conscience of the duties of their relations, and would have their house-bolds or friends to serve the Lord as well as they.]

12. Luk. 14. 26, 33. & 18. 22. Matth. 10. 37. Rom. 8. 17, 18.

From these and other texts it is evident, that [all things are below Christ and heaven in the practical esteem of a Godly man, and that he will forsake them all rather then he will forsake him.] All these are Scripture Marks of Godliness.

Having hastily run over these things to help you in the Tryal, I will add some Directions to help you in the practice, and therein yet fulyer to acquaint you, Wherein true Godliness doth consist.]

Briefly to lay before you first the meer enumeration of the chief points wherein sound Godliness doth consist, to help your memories, while you see them close together. 1. Sound Godliness consisteth in a solid understanding of the substantial points of Religion. 2. In a sound belief of the Truth of Gods word, and the reality of the unseen things. 3. In an adhearing to the holy Scriptures as the Divine Rule of faith and life. 4. In the Love of God in Jesus Christ, excited by the belief of his Love revealed by Jesus Christ. 5. In true humility, and low thoughts of our selves, and low expectation from others. 6. In a heavenly mind that most regardeth the things above, and seeketh them as our only felicity at home. 7. In self denial, and mortification, and temperance, and victory over the desires of the flesh. When we can deny our own conceits, and interests and wills for God: and are dead to the world, and are not servants to our fleshly appetites or senses, or to the things below. 8. In thankfulness for received Mercies, and raising the Glorious name of God. 9. In the willing and diligent use of the means that God hath appointed us for salvation. 10. In charity or Love to

all men, even our enemies ; and a special love to true Believers. 11. In a love to the holy communion of Saints, especially in publike worship. 12. In a tender desire of the unity of the Saints, and their concord and increase of Charity ; and a trouble at their discord and divisions. 13. In dealing Justly in our places with all men, and carefully avoiding all that may be injurious to any. 14. In studying to do all the good we can : and doing it to our power, especially to the household of faith. 15. In a conscientious discharge of the duties of our relations, as Rulers, Teachers, Parents, Masters, subjects and inferiors. 16. In watchfulness against Temptations, and avoiding occasions of sin. 17. In serious preparations for sufferings and death, and patient bearing them when they come. These are the things that Godliness doth consist in.

And now out of all I will draw up ten practical directions, which in a special manner I would intreat you to Practise, if you would be solidly Godly, and not be deceived with names or counterfeits.

Direct. 1. Be sure to live upon the substantials of Religion, and let them receive no detriment by a pretence of Zeal for lesser points : Lay not your Religion in uneffectual opinions ; and let lower truths and duties keep their places, and not be set above the higher.

Dir. 2. See that your Religion be principally seated in the Heart. Understand it as well as you can (lest it be taken from you ;) but never think it is savingly your own while it is but in the brain : so much you believe indeed as you Love, and as hath imprinted the Image of God upon your hearts : Ever see that your wills be reserved for God and holiness ; and that you be able truly to say, I would

(d 2) be

be perfect : and I would fain be better then I am.]

Direct. 3. Be sure you take up with God alone as your whole felicity, and think not that there is a necessity of the approbation of men, or of liberty, plenty, life or anything besides God. Do not only think that there is a God, and a life of Glory for you : but Live upon them, and be moved and actuated by them : Trust to them ; and take them for your part. Live by faith, and not by sight.

Direct. 4. Live daily upon Christ as the only Mediator, without whom we have no access to God, acceptance with him, or receivings from him. Look for all that you have from God to come by him ; Live on him for Reconciliation, for Teaching, for Preservation, for Communication, for Consolation, and for Salvation. Let Christ make your thoughts of God more familiar, as now Reconciled and Condescending to us.

Direct. 5. Obey the sanctifying motions of the spirit : and if you have disobeyed, Repent ; not despairing, but returning to obedience ; but see that you live not in any known sin, which a sanctified will can enable you to avoid. Resist sins of passion ; but most carefully take heed of sins of interest, deliberately chosen, and kept up as necessary or good.

Direct. 6. Make it the principal work of your Religion and your Lives, to inflame your hearts with the Love of God, as he is presented amiable in his wonderful Grace in Jesus Christ. Strive no further to affect

ffect your hearts with Fears or Griefs, or other troubling passions, then as tendeth to the work of Love, or is a just expression of it. Go daily to promises, and mercies, and Christ, and Heaven, of purpose for fewel to kindle Love: Be much herefors in Thankfulness and Praise, which are works of Love. All goeth on sweetly, and easily, and acceptably, that is carried on by Love. That is the best soul, and likeliest to God, that hath most of Love to God and Godliness: And that is the best service, and likeliest to the work of Heaven, that hath most of Love: Let the principal striving and pleading with your hearts be to kindle Love: and your principal complaints for the want of it.

Direct. 7. Keep up Charity to all, even unto enemies; and special Love to all the Godly. And therefore hate back-biting and slandering, and making the worst of other mens actions: Take them as thieves that come to rob you of your Charity: He that speaks evil of another, persuadeth you so far to hate him (unless it be in Charity, persuading you to seek his cure.) Hear the reproacher and back-biter understandingly, as if he said, in words, as he doth in sense, [I pray you hate such a man, or abate your Love to him.] As the way to cause Love is to represent the object lovely, which doth much more then to command me to Love it: So the way to cause Hatred, is to represent the object hateful or unlovely, which is more then to bid me hate our brother. And he that hateth his brother is a man-slayer, and none such have eternal life abiding in them. Away therefore with those Volumes of Learned slanders and reproaches, between betwixt uncharitableness and self love, (or pride,) and take them as the Devils Books, that are written to draw thee to hate thy brother. Frown also upon the censorious: Take heed also of divisions and parties, because they are racemines

to universal Love ; and are but Imposthumes or Biles of the Church, where Zeal and Love are diseasedly drawn into a narrow compass ; and that is appropriated to a few, that should be common to all Believers. Cherish meekness and patience, and reject all that carnal Zeal or Envy, Contention and Animosities, which are contrary to Love. Read and study well the third Chapter of St. James, and the Epistles of John.

Direct. 8. Understand the preciousness and use of time. Love Diligence the better, because it is a Redeeming of time ; a doing much in a little time. Hate that which would rob you of so precious a commodity.

Direct. 9. See that there be no predominant selfishness or worldly interest unmortified at the heart. Study duty, and do it faithfully, and trust God with Life, Estate, and Events : and shift not for your selves by sinfull means.

Direct. 10. Maintain your authority over your sense and fleshly appetites : Captivate not Reason to the Brutish part ; especially under pretence of liberty. Use your bodies as may strengthen them, and best fit them for the work of God : Let them have so much delight in things allowed as conduceith to this ; but take heed of making the delights of flesh and sense your end, or allowing your selves in an unprofitable pleasing of your enemy ; or of corrupting your minds, and relishing too much sweetness in the things of the flesh, and losing your relish of Spiritual things. Set not the bait too near you : Keep the Gun-powder from the fire. He that believeth that if ever he be damned, it will be for Pleasing his flesh before God ; and if ever he be saved, he must be first and principally

principally saved from the inordinate Pleasures of the flesh, will not be so forward as brutish Infidels are, to seek out for delights, and plead for all that pleaseth them as harmless.

Having thus in the Introduction shewed you [What Godlinets is,] and How it may be known ; and What you must do to be soundly and sincerely Godly, I hope you are prepared for the following Discourse, of the Certain Necessity and Excellency of Godlinets, which tends to fetch over the delaying, resisting, unresolved wills, of those that are yet in the BRUTISH state, and are strangers to the Dispositions, Employments, Desires, Hopes and Joyes of true Believers. The Lord concurre effectually with his Blessing ! Amen.

LUX 10. 41. 42.

And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but One thing is Needful: and Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her.


N order to the decision of the Great Controversie practically managed through the world, Whether Godliness, or worldliness and sensuality be better? I have already performed the first part of my task, in proving the Certainty of the Principles of Godliness, and of Christianity; which of it will infer the Conclusion, which I undertake to prove; that the Reasons for Godliness are so sure, and that, and great, that every one must be A SAINT or A BRUTE: He that will not choose a life of HOLINESS, hath no other to fall into but a life of SENSUALITY: Either the superior faculties proper to a Rational Nature must be predominant, and then we can be no less than SAINTS: Or else the inferior brutifaculties will be predominant; and then, (though from your natural Powers you are called MEN, yet) if you may be denominated from your intended END, and from the USE of your faculties in order to that END, you are but an ingenuous kind of BRUTES; exceeding Apes and Monkeys in the cunning contrivance of your unhappy designs; but incomparably worse in your success; because you were

were indeed entrusted with the noble faculties and gifts of *M E N*, while you captivated them unto your *Appetites and Sense*, and lived but to the *END of BEASTS*.

The second thing that I have to do, for the conquering all opposition to this Conclusion, is, to prove the *NECESSITT* of *HOLINESS*: which (being now to speak to such as profess to believe the holy Scriptures,) I may easily do from this plain and pregnant Text: To which I shall annex such cogent *REASONS* as may silence those that will not acquiesce in the authority of the holy Word.

So great is the difference between a *dreaming Opinion* in Religion (called a *Dead Faith*); and a *serious, hearty, practical Belief*, that if they that say (and do but say) they believe the holy Scriptures, and yet are *ungodly*, had soundly Believed, Considered and digested this very Text, it would have made such a change both in their *Hearts and Lives*, as would have told them by happy experience, that the Gospel is not a dead letter, nor *saving faith* a lifeless uneffectual thing; and that God sent not his son into the world only to be complemented with, and reverently treated with a few good words; nor his Gospel and Ministers merely to be entertained with a demure, silent, and respectful audience; nor hath proposed his Kingdom to be merely the matter of commendation or discourse: But that as man is a creature of a Noble and Capacious Nature, so he hath an high and noble *End*, and consequently the highest imployment for his *Reason*; and that *Religion* is the most *NECESSARY*, and must be the most *SERIOUS* business in the world. Did they believe this Text, as verily as they pretend to believe the Gospel, it would help to the recovery of the understandings of the Ambitious, and make the proud ashamed of their glory, and settle the drunken aspiring minds of those that think it worth more than their salvation, to sit upon the highest perch: It would call off the covetous worldling from his immoderate seeking provisions for the flesh, and save them that are drowned in the cares of this life, by shewing them the true and necessary, treasure: It would spare them many a vexatious thought, and a great deal of unnecessary labour, and prevent the shame and horrour that must befall them, when in the end they find their labour lost, and all their expectations frustrate: It would quickly stop the mouths which prejudice, ignorance, malignant envy,

mity and delirious, have opened against a life of faith and serious Godliness ; and cause them that scorn it as a needless thing, to make it their daily business and delight. It would tell the sluggish sensual sinner, that he hath work of everlasting consequence upon his hand, and that it is no time to dream or loiter : And it would tell the brutish sensualist that there are more sweet and durable delights ; and the time-wasting fool that time is precious, and he hath none to spare and cast away, having so great a work to do. It would set men on seeking with greatest diligence, the Kingdom which before they did but dream of ; and would turn the very stream of their hearts and lives on that which before they minded but as on the by. In a word, it would make the earthly to become heavenly, and the fleshly spiritual, and the fleshy to be diligent, and rotten-hearted sinners to become renewed *S A I N T S*, as all must do that ever will be saved. And if these words of Christ be not thus received by you, and work not such wonders on mens hearts, it is not because there is any want of *firmness* in the Text, but because mens hearts are hardened into a wilful contempt of the most precious truths, which in themselves are apt to change and save them.

Of all waies of *Teaching*, *History* is accounted One of the most effectual ; because it hath the greatest advantage on our apprehensions, as setting our lesson before our eyes in the great character of *Example*, and not only in the smaller letter of a naked precept. And of all *History*, What can be more powerful, then 1. Where one of the actors is the eternal son of God : and that not above our reach in Heaven, but here in our flesh, on the stage of this sublunary world. 2. And the other actors are such as most fitly represent the different actions of all the world, at least that live within the sound of the Gospel ; and lay open the great question about which the world is so much divided. 3. And when the matter it self is of the greatest consequence, that can be imagined ; even concerning the present choice and resolution of our hearts, and that expending of our Time, and that business and employment of our lives, on which our Endless life dependeth. All this you have here set out even to the life, before your eyes, in the glair of this example in my Text : And the Lord of Life doth call you all to see your faces in it ; and here plainly sheweth you what will be expected from you, and what you must do, and do, and *not* do ; and this not in any long and tedious

ons discourse ; that might overcharge your memories, or weary your attentions ; but in very brief, though full expressions.

As Jesus entered into Bethany, *Martha* (who it seems was the Owner of the house) received and entertained him : No doubt but a great company followed Jesus ; or his Disciples that ordinarily accompanied him, at the least. *Martha* thinks that having entertained such a guest, it were a great neglect ; if she should not provide for him and for his followers : and therefore she is busie in doing what she can ; but the number is so great, that she is oppressed with the care and trouble, and findeth that she hath more to do then she is able : Her sister that she thought should have helped her in such a case, is sitting with the Disciples, at the feet of Christ, to hear his Word. *Martha* seeing this, is offended at her sister, and seems to think that Christ himself is too negligent of her, or partial for her sister ; and therefore thus pleads her cause with Christ, [*Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone ? bid her therefore that she help me.*] As if she had said, [*Is it a fit thing that both thy self and all this company should be unprovided for, and have neither meat nor drink ? Or is it fit that all should be laid on me, even more then I can do, while she sits hearing with the Disciples ? Deal equally and mercifully and bid her help me.*] And indeed most people would think that this was but a reasonable motion, and that when Christ was made the Judge between them, he should have decided the case on *Martha's* side : But he did not so : But 1. instead of commanding *Martha* for her care and diligence, he sheweth her error, by a gentle, but yet a close reproof : [*Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things.*] 2. Instead of reproofing *Mary* for negligence of her duty in the house, he highly commendeth her for the reasonable doing of a greater work. [*Mary hath chosen the good part.*] 3. He groundeth the Reason of his judgement on the different Nature and Use of their employments : [*One thing is Needful*] in comparison of which, the rest were all unnecessary things, and such as then might have been neglected. 4. And so he passeth sentence on *Mary's* side, that the good part which she hath chosen [*shall not be taken away from her*] : In which he not only answereth *Martha* with an express denial, as if he should say, [*I will not take off Mary from the work which she hath chosen*], but also on that occasion doth point out the

the nature of the Good which she had chosen, and promise the
continuance of it.

Concerning *Martha*, some expositors run into two extremes. Some think that she was an unregenerate worldling, and favourably only fleshly things, and that these words of Christ, describe her state as one that had not yet made choice of the one thing *useful*, and the *better part*. But it is only her present action that Christ doth reprehend and censure, and not her state : Her entertainment of Christ, and speeches to him, and other passages, give us great probabilitie that she was a true disciple, as after it is said that *Jesus loved her*, *John 11.5.*

On the other side, One Learned *Annotator* thus Paraphraseth the words of Christ to *Martha*, [*Thou takest a great deal of unnecessary, though not culpable pains*] ; as if Christ's words were a reprobation of her, nor her course blame-worthy.

But the plain truth lieth between these two extremes : *Martha*, though most probably a true Disciple, was here too blame, in preferring a *lesser day* before a *greater*, and doing that *unseasonably*, which in due time was to be done, and in neglecting an opportunity for the hearing of Christ's word, which *Mary* took. It was not only *blameless*, but a *day* in itself, to make provision for Christ and his attendants : but she should have been hearing first while he was preaching, and taken that opportunity for the benefit of her soul : It was no ordinary Preacher that was come under her roof : His stay was not like to belong to his doctrine concerned her salvation. She knew not whether ever she should have the like opportunity again : And therefore she should have rather stayed for his own direction, when to go make provision for their bodies, then to have omitted the hearing of his word.

But you'll ask perhaps, [*When a Sermon and other worldly business fall out at once, are we always bound to hear the Sermon?*]

I answer, No, not always ; For else in great Cities that have frequent preaching, you should do nothing else but hear : We have a *Body* as well as a *Soul* ; and must have meet imployment for both, and must make due provision for both ; and must be serviceable to the *bodyly welfare* of others, and to the *concerning good*. Our *bodyly labour* and *temporal employment* must be *consciously followed*, as well as our *spiritual* ; For God

hath determined that in the sweat of our faces we shall eat our bread, Gen. 3. 19. and even in innocency Adam was put into the garden to dress or till and keep it, Gen. 2. 15. with quietness we must labour and eat our own bread; and if any will not work, neither should he eat, 2 Thess. 3. 12. 10. See Pauls example, v.8.

[Neither did we eat any mans bread for nought: but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you] We must labour, working with our hands, that we may have to give to him that needeth, Eph. 4. 28. And if our bodies have not competent employment; they will grow such rusty unfit instruments for the soul to work by, that when Melancholy, or other diseases have disabled them, the soul it self will have the loss; and he that will do nothing but hear, and pray, and meditate, is likely shortly to be scarce able to pray and meditate at all, (unless it be one of a very strong and healthfull constitution.)

No one therefore from this determination of Christ to *Mary and Martha*, is to be driven from their lawfull Calling into a contrary extrem. But this was not the case between *Mary* and *Martha*: It was a *special opportunity* which then was to be taken; We must first seek Gods kingdom, and its righteousness: and prudently take such opportunities for our souls as we can, without omitting greater duties, and as our case requireth: not taking as much food as we can *ingest*, but as much as we can *digest*: It is possible to eat too much, but not to digest too well. A Christian must have prudence, when two duties come together, to know which at that present time is the greatest, and to be preferred: which dependeth much on the *necessity*, and the *ends*: the good that will follow the doing of them, and the hurt that will follow the omission: And without this prudential discerning of *time* and *duty*, we shall never order our conversations aright, but shall live in a continual sin, when we are doing that, which in its own nature and season is our duty.

A poor man may not Read and Hear so frequently as a Rich (ordinarily,) nor a Servant as the Master; because there would greater evils follow the omission of their common labour at that time.

Thus much being said for the Explication of the Text, there is no more necessary but what will fall in most conveniently

th the Matter: The sense is as if Christ should have said *Martha, Martha; I know thou doest all this in love to me, and anest well in it; and it is no more then what's thy duty in its per season: But O what is the food that perisheth in compari-* of that which endureth to everlasting life! It is my meat and drink to do the will of him that sent me, in feeding and ining souls: Thou hadst now an opportunity to hear my word, word of the Son of God, thy Saviour, and thereby to have promoted thy Everlasting happiness, as Mary doth; and this should have been preferred even before this provision for our bodies: and for this thou hadst now omitted thy care and labour about eat and drink; I would not at all have been offended with thee: thou hadst thy choice, and Mary had her choice; Thou hast chosen care and trouble about many things, and made thy self a great mal adu; but Mary hath chosen that one thing that was necessary, which is the better part, and therefore it shall not be taken from her, but she shall possess the benefit of her choice.

Where note for the fuller understanding of it, the true opposition between the case of *Mary* and *Martha*.

1. As to the *Matter*, *Martha* had many things in hand; multifarious care and trouble; but *Mary* had but *One*.

2. As to the *Manner* and *effects* of their employments: *Martha* was full of care and troubles, distracted or disturbed by the imberance of her businesses: but *Mary* was quietly hearing and learning how to be free from care and trouble, and how to attain Everlasting rest.

3. As to the *quality* of their business; *Martha's* was of less necessity or concernment, though good and honest in its place: but *Mary's* was about the thing of *absolute necessity*.

Also *Martha's* was *Good* in its season, but a *lesser good*: but *Mary's* was [that *Good part*,] which containeth all other good, or referreth to it, and therefore was to be preferred.

4. And therefore as to the *continuance*, *Mary's* being a more eligible imployment, and about an everlasting treasure, shall not be taken from her, when the fruit of *Martha's* imployment will quickly have an end.

Yet in these different cases, each one had her choice: Had *Martha* chosen better, she had had better. And the choice much proceeded from the judgement and disposition: Had she judged better,

better, and been inclined better, *Martha* would have done better.

Before we come to the principal Doctrines, we may profitably note these Observations by the way.

1. Note here that [the nearest Natural Relations (as Brothers and Sisters, yea, Parents and Children) are not always of one mind or way in the matters of their salvation.] Greater difference may be between them, then this between *Martha* and *Mary* in the Text. They may rise up against each other, and seek each others lives, as Christ foretold, *Mark* 13.12. And therefore Father, Mother, Brother Sister, and all are to be denied for Christ (that I say not hated, as Christ saith, *Luke* 14.26.) when they stand in opposition to him. The same parentage and education made not *Esau* and *Jacob* of a disposition, or of one mind or way: nor *Isaac* and *Ismael*: nor *Sem* and *Cham*: nor would restrain *Cain*, the first man born into the world, from cruel murdering his brother, upon a difference about their Religions, caused by his own ungodly mind; even because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous and acceptable to God, *1 John* 3. 12. And therefore Parents must patiently submit (having done their duty) if even the children of their bodies should prove reprobates: And Brothers and Sisters must submit, if these in so near a relation be Cast-awayes: God hath not promised that all our kindred shall be saved. Rejoyce then you are not your selves forsaken; and be glad that any, and so many are sanctified, though further from you in the flesh; and love them in their more excellent relation to Christ and you.

2. Note here, how our Lord doth spend his time in the place and company where he is. When he entreth into a house, he is presently at work in teaching poor souls the way to God; Or else how could *Mary* have been employed in hearing him? In our places and measure we should imitate him in this: Can you come into any house or company, and find nothing to say or do for God? Is there none wiser then your selves that you may learn of, as *Mary* did of Christ? nor none more ignorant whom Charity requireth you to teach? Not none that need a quickening word, to mind them of their everlasting state? As soon as worldly, or vain ungodly people get together, they are presently upon some worldly, or vain discourse; And if you be indeed heavenly

heavenly and spiritual people, should you not be more ready when you come together, for heavenly spiritual discourse? Have you not a thousand fold more to set your tongues on work? The necessities of the hearers: the hopes of doing good; the presence of God, the sense of the duty, the sweetness of the subject; the avoiding of sin, and the blessing of God's acceptance to your selves? O had we but the skill, and will, and diligence, that this interlocutory preaching by holy conference doth require, what a happy party would it be for the promoting of men's salvation, where the more publick preaching of the Gospel is wanting? Who can forbid us by familiar discourse to exercise our charity, in minding poor regardless sinners of the life to come? and exhorting them to due preparation, and repentance; and to open to them the riches of Christ, and set forth his love, and draw them to embrace him.

3. Note here, how carefully we should take the present opportunities for our souls, to hear and learn as Mary did. She stands not cavelling like our full stomach'd hearers, that ask, How can you prove that I am bound to hear such a Lecture, or to come to Church and hear a Sermon twice on the Lord's day, or to come to the Minister to ask advice, or be instructed by him? No more then a hungry man will ask, How prove you that it is my duty to eat every day? Or then a sick man will say, How prove you that I am bound to seek to the Physician, to go or send to his house, and to look after him? As there is much in the very New nature, and health, and relish of a gracious soul, to decide such Controversies as these without any subtlety of argument; so a Christian's prudence and care of his salvation will tell him, that when Christ hath a voice to speak to him, it becometh him to have an ear to hear; and that the Sermon telleth the hearer the season of his duty, and the offer of a mercy telleth us when it is our duty to accept it, without any other more particular obligation: unless when we can truly say as before God, that some duty that at that time is greater, hindreth us. These are easie questions to those that labour the things of the Spirit. When Christ is speaking, Mary will be hearing; and if I erring, shall not call her off.

If any shall say, [So would we too, if we could but find it.] I answer, Remember that he never intendeth to withdraw us from earth, and teach his Church personally by his own mouth, but

hath appointed Messengers and Officers to proclaim his Law unto the world, and tender them his grace, and faith, [*He that beareth you beareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me, Luke 10. 16.* and he that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, 1 Thes. 4. 8. And he that will not now believe and hear Christ speaking by his Ministers, when he is acknowledged to be the son of God, and his sealed Word hath had so long possession in the world, would hardly have regarded Christ himself in a time when he appeared in the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man, and was believed on but by a few persons then counted but inconsiderable.

4. Note also, the humility and teachableness of Disciples in those times, who were wont to sit learning at their Teachers feet: Which was then an ordinary case, and not of Christ Disciples only. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, Acts 22. 3. Not like the proud and self-conceited part of our bearers in these times, that come to hear somewhat for their malicious or contentious minds to quarrel with, and expect that their Teachers tell them nothing but what is agreeable to their own conceits, and think us to be injurious to them, if we would heal their ignorance or impiety, and make them any wiser or better then they are, and that reproach us and set themselves against us as their enemies, if we will not be ruled by them and humour them in all our administrations, as if we were the patients and they the Physician, we the learners and they the Teachers, yea we their servants, and they our Guides and Rulers in the matters of our own Office.

But let us come closer to the words themselves, and consider of the Instructions which they afford us, which are these.

Doct. 1. It is but One thing that is of absolute necessity; but it is many things that those are taken up with, that neglect that one.

Doct. 2. The One thing needful leadeth to content; but the many things of the world do trouble, and disquiet, and distract the soul.

Doct. 3. All men where the Gospel is preached, have their choice whether they will seek and have the one thing necessary, or trouble and distract themselves with the many things that are unnecessary.

Doct. 4. They that choose the One thing necessary, do choose the good part; and they that choose any other, do make an evil and unhappy choice.

Doct. 3.

Doct. 5. The One thing needful shall not be taken from them that choose it: but they that choose it not, shall have no better then they choose.

Doct. 6. Those that make the bad unhappy choice, are apt to grudge at them that choose better, and will not think and do as they.

Doct. 7. When the matter is brought before the Lord Jesus Christ, he will not take part with those that murmur at his servants choice, and speak against them; but will commend their choice, and condemn the contrary.

All this you see lie plain here in the Text, and it is all worthy our larger consideration: But the first is like to hold me so long, that to avoid prolixity, the rest shall be but touched under that.

Doct. 1. One thing is Needful: It is nothing only that is absolutely Necessary; but many things that men busie themselves about, that neglect this one.

In handling this, I must shew you, 1. In what respect it is that this Needful thing is said to be *but One*.

2. How it is that the troublous matters of the world, are called *many*.

3. Whereto and how far this one thing is necessary.

4. Whether the rest are indeed unnecessary.

5. I shall assist you in the application of it to your selves, that it may reach the end to which I do intend it.

I. In what respect is the Needful thing *but One*?

Which will be the easier understood, when you know what the One thing Needful is: And it is, most directly, that which is our End, To be saved, and to please the Lord, or to Glorify God and enjoy him in Glory for ever: Which comprehendeth or implieth the necessary means.

And this blessed state is *One*, considered 1. Objectively: It is One God that we have to please, and to behold, and love, and praise for ever. 2. It is *One* formally: that is, It is only the final fruition of this *One* God that is our End and Blessedness. And thus the End being principally meant, it is said that *One* thing is needful.

ary ; though the *Means* may be more then *One* that are necessary to obtain it.

And yet even with respect unto the *means*, it may be said that *One thing is necessary*, by a General Comprehensive speech, as *One* containeth many parts : As to *cure a sickness* may be said to be the *One thing needful to preserve a mans life*; when yet that cure must be done by *many acts and means* : The *means* are but *One thing* as *denominated* from their *End* ; even our everlasting happiness. And they are but *One* as *denominated* from their *Original*, they being all but the *Will of God* revealed in his *Word* for mans direction to salvation. And they are all *One* in the principal stock that proceedeth from this *Original* or *root* : and that is, the *Lord Jesus Christ* himself, who is therefore eminently called *the way* ; because there is *no other way or means*, but what standeth in a due *subordination* to the *Redeemer* as the *chief means*, as well as to the *pure God-head* as the *End*.

Also as all the *means* of *Gods appointment*, have a union of *Nature* or *similitude* with the *End* : And as *Gods Image* is *One* in all his *children*, so is it, in their kind and measure, in all his *Ordinances* and *Means* : They also in their kind and place are *partakers of the Divine nature* : The name of *God* is as it were written upon them, and his blessed nature legible in them.

Also the *means* are all but *One*, as all are parts of *One holy frame*, which most harmoniously concurr to the doing of one work : As all the wheels and other parts are but *One Coach* which carryeth us to our journeys end. As *Christ* and his *Church* are *one Body*, *1 Cor. 12. 12*. So *Christ* and all subordinate means for the recovery and salvation of his own, are *one Kingdom of God*, and *one way to the Father*, and *one salvation* : I shall fullyer open it under the next head.

And now for the *Negative*, you may discern by what is said,

2. That here is no such *unity* as even in the *end* must confound *God and man*, or *his glory and our salvation*.

2. Nor is here any such *Unity* as doth confound the *End* and *Means* ; no not the *God-head* with the *man-hood* of the *Redeemer*, much less with the *inferior kind of beings*.

3. Nor is there any such *Unity* as doth confound *all the means* among themselves, and make *all one* ; or exclude the rest by exalting *one* ; but rather each one doth *suppose* the rest, to constitute the *perfect frame*. *Christ* doth not exclude *Faith* ; nor *Faith* exclude

clude *Repentance*; nor *Faith* and *Repentance* exclude *Obedience*; nor doth the office of one of these exclude the use and office of the rest. *Publike* duties exclude not *private*; nor do *private* exclude *publike*: One part excludeth not another; reading excludeth not preaching, nor both of them praying; but their nature and use bespeaketh a conjunction; The whole body is not an eye or hand; nor doth the Unity exclude but include even the smallest members.

4. Nor is there such a Unity as excludeth difference of Degrees: or one means may be more necessary and excellent then another: and the same person by growing doth differ from himself as he was before: and one will hereafter excell another in *Glory*, now they do in holiness and faithful improvement of their talents.

II. Let us next lay both together; and see how the troubling matters of the world are, called [Many] in opposition to his *One*.

And 1. Every creature to a sensual man, is made by him in some sort, *his End and God*: For he doth not *Use it only*, and *despise it* as the godly do, to an end that is *One*, but he would *Endeavour it*, and make it *objectively* his end it self, and so idolize it. And therefore though in the general notion of *Delight* they all agree; yet *materially* what abundance of *ends* and *gods* have carnal men? Every sense must have its *own delight*: the eye must have its *delight*, and the appetite its *delight*; and so of the rest.

2. And also these fleshly baits and pleasures are discordant even among themselves: They draw the sinner several waies; and one of them fighteth against the other: The *riches* of the sensualist do usually contradict his *ease*; and often his *vanitie* and *humour*; and his *ambition* and *pride* doth bridle his disgraceful *lust*; and one sin will not let another have *its end*, but robbeth him of the poor expected fruit: And thus they do distract the sinners, and tear their very hearts in pieces; and divide and dismember them, where God would heal them and unite them in himself. And the toilsome cares and labours by which things must be obtained, are many, and oft contrary to one another; and a great deal of stir it is that a deluded creature can make for little purpose.

The summe then of both these Heads is this. The matter of Christians Faith, and Religion, Desire, Hope and Love, is there fore called *One thing*, because God who is *One*, is the summe of all. It is but *One Sun*, though it hath *many beams*; and all these beams are nothing but the emanations of the Sun; and have nothing but what they have from it: God is All to the *Religion* and the *Soul* of a true Believer: and therefore *All* to him is *One*. Creatures, and Duties, and Ordinances which are *many*, are all *but One* to him in *God*. His *Faith* beholdeth them, and his *Actions* relish them as *united all in God*. 1. As their *Spring* from whom they flow. 2. And as the *Life* by whom they are all *animated*; and as the *matter and sense* which they *signifie* and *import*. 3. And as their *end* to which they tend, and in which they all terminate and agree.

Many branches are but *One Tree*, and have *One Stock*: and many members are *One body*, because they are animated with *One soul*. Many letters, syllables and words may make *One sentence*, and many leaves may make *One Book*, and treat but of *One subje^tct*. Many actions of a *Plow-man* are called *Plowing*, and of a *Weaver*, *Weaving*, &c. as being all united in *One end*: I know these similes have their dissimilitude, but this is the summe; that *It is God that the Believer seeth, and seeketh, and loveth, and converseth with, and intendeth in all the Ordinances of grace, in all his duties, and in all the creatures*: and in *God* they are *united, and One thing to him*. He hath nothing to do at *Church*, or at *home*, in *private* or *publike*, but *live to God*, and *seek after the everlasting enjoyment of him*. If *weakness and temptation* put any *other busyness* into his *hands*, he is so far *stept out of the Christian way*. In his *very common labours and mercies*, (so far as he is *Holy*) *God is to him, the spring, the life, the sweetnes, the beauty, the strength, the meaning, and the end of all*, and there fore *All in All*.

But the creatures in the *hands and use* of the *ungodly*, (or of the *godly* so far as they *use them sinfully*) have no such *Unity*. Though in themselves they so depend on *God*, that none can make a *separation*, nor can they at all exist without him; yet in the *sense, estimation, ends and use* of the *ungodly*, the creatures are separated from *God*, and are as *branches cut off from the tree*; and departing from *God*, these men are gone from *Unity*, and are *lost, distracted and confounded in the multitude*

de of the creatures ; and will never have Unity till they return
God.

III. In the next place let us consider, *What is the Necessary*
it is here spoken of, and *How far this One thing is Necessary*
us.

And 1. *One thing is Necessary Morally* [for it self] which
our ultimate end: When other things are Necessary but [for
r.]

2. *Comprehensively of the Means* we may say, that *One thing*
it is, *Sanctification*, is *Necessary* to the *Pleasing of God*; which
be regarded, 1. As the *end of Obedience*, and 2. As the *end*
Love: by the *obedient soul* in *way of duty*; and by the *loving*
devoted to God, as *its Delight*.

The world hath *many contrary Masters*, and therefore hath
y things to do to *please* them; and when they have done
ir best, they cannot please them all, but may leave more dis-
satisfied then they please: For those that they *must* please, expect
possibilities; and many a *single person* perhaps may look for
much as you can give to *all*: And they have such contrary
rests, which you must serve if you will please them; and con-
trary minds which you must humour, that the same things that
expects to *please* him, will *vehemently displease* another; and
haps the *more displease* the *other*, because it is *pleasing* to
it *one*.

And *our selves* have *our contrarieties in our selves*, and are as
rd to be pleased by *others* or *our selves*. We have *our sensual*
fires which are *unreasonable* and *irordinate*, *unseasonable* and
unfortunate, and will take no *Nay*. A *sensual*, *covetous*, *ambi-*
tious *fantasie*, is a *bottomless vessel*: Your pouring in doth no
bit fill it: it is a *devouring gulf*, a *consuming* (that I say
or an *unquenchable*) *fire*: Like the *horse-leech* it *craveth*,
Give, and the more you give, the more it *craveth*, and is
ever *left unsatisfied*, then when it hath *glutted* it *self* with that
om which it *seeketh* *satisfaction*:

But *God* is *One*, and with this *One thing* is he pleased, even
with a *Holy heart* and *life*: He hath no *contrary* *contradictio-*
n *assertions*: and therefore hath no *contradiction*: *One thing*
that which must please him, must be suitable to his *holiness* and *life*.

He is infinite in *Wisdom*, and therefore hath no pleasure in such that bring him *sacrifice*, and refuse *obedience*, and know not that they do *evil*, Eccles. 5. 1. and have not the wit to know what they do, and whom they speak to; and to know that which only is worth the knowing: How often do we read him rejecting the *sacrifice* of the *wicked*, and casting their costliest offerings in their faces, as things that he abhorreth, when they come to him without that humble, loving, and obedient heart, which he requireth! Psalm 50. 8, &c. Isa. 1. 11, 12. to ver. 20. Their *oblations* are *vain*, the multitude of their *sacrifice* is to no *purpose*, and *incense* is an *abomination* to him; their *Feasts* and *Sabbath* his *soul* hateth, they are a trouble to him, he cannot bear them, if they come without the *One thing* necessary. Without this he careth not for their *fastings*, or *formalities*, Isa. 38. 5. It is no *thousands* of *rams*, or *ten thousand* *rivers* of *oyle*, nor the *frasid* *their body*, if they would give it for the *sin* of *their soul*, *charbe* will accept: But he hath shewed thee *O man* what is *good*: *what* doth the *Lord* require of thee, but to do *justly*, and *love* *mercy*, and *walk* *humbly* with thy *God*? Mic. 6. 7, 8. The conclusion of the whole matter is this; *Fear God and keep his commandments*: for this is the *whole duty* of man, Eccles. 12. 13.

You are never the better beloved of *God* for being *Rich*, or *honourable* in the *world*, nor yet because you are *poor*, or in *mean condition*, nor because you are *sick* or *well*, *weak* or *strong*, *comely* or *uncomely*; but because you *Love* him through his *Son*, and *Believe* in him whom the *Father* hath sent, John 16. 27. *Without* *faith* it is impossible to please *God*: Heb. 11. 6. The *new man* must be put on, which is *renewed* in *knowledge*, after the *Image* of him that created him, where there is *neither Greek*, *nor Jew*, *Barbarian*, *Scythian*, *bond* nor *free*, but *Christ* is *all* and *in all*,] Col. 3. 10, 11. [For in *Christ* *Jesus* *circumcision* availleth *nothing*, nor *uncircumcision*, but a *New Creature*, and *Faith* the *works* by *Love*, and the *keeping* of the *commands* of *God*, Gal. 5. 6 & 6. 15. 1 Cor. 7. 19.

This *One thing* (even *Godliness* which is *profitable* to *all* *things*) is *necessary* in *us*, (supposing the *necessaries* in *Christ*) to render *us* *acceptable* to the *Holy God*: and without this all the *accomplishments* *imaginable*, will make *us* but as *swounding brass* as a *sinking Cymbal*, 1 Cor. 13. 1.

3. *One thing* is *needfull* to the *saving* of *our souls*, without which

which all things else are vain. There are many wayes to Hell; but to Heaven there is but One: There are a thousand wayes to delude and blind a soul, but only one for its true and saving illumination. Erroneous Sectaries are blinded in some particular points, by the seducing words of men: And ungodly sensualists are blinded in the main, and damnable err from the necessary practical doctrines of salvation, being deceived by the inclination of their own concupisence: Errors are multifarious; and abound even in many that inveigh most fiercely against the erroneous: But Truth is simple; We have One Teacher to instruct us; One Spirit to enlighten us, One Word of God to be our Rule; One Light to guide us through all the darkness and mazes of the world, and recover our deluded darkened minds. Thousands are ready to draw us away from God; Temptations lye thick on every hand; Within us, and without us; before us and on each side: Which way can you look or go, but you will meet with baits and snares? And if Eve be once deceived, Adam is the easilier overcome. When the appetite and senses are ensnared by their objects, and the imagination corrupted, the understanding is in danger of deceit. You may go into an Hospital, and see variety of diseases: but Health is one and the same: One hath the pestilence, and another hath the leprosie, and another a palsie, and another is distracted: but among a thousand people in Health, you see no such difference: Health only is formally the cure of all.

What abundance of miserable sinners be in the world, that are almost at Hell already? But only one sort of men, even the regenerate, are rescued by grace, and shall be saved from it. Many inventions have men found out for their destruction; but there is no way but by Christ, through faith and holiness, to their salvation. Set as light by Christ and Holiness as you will, and deride it as foolishly and perversly as you please, you will find at last, that this way or none must bring you to Heaven. Either ignorance, or pride, or covetousness, or malice, or gluttony, or drunkenness, or voluptuousness or lust, or any one sin of an hundred may be your ruine: But there is only One salve to heal these sores; and only one cordiall or antidote that can expell these several sorts of poison from your hearts. *Godliness is profitable in all things.* 1 Tim. 4. 8.

Drudge for the world as long as you will, and gape after D honour,

honour and applause from men, and try a thousand wayes for your content; but when you have all done, you must return by *sound Repentance* into the *way of holiness*, or you are lost for ever. When you have slighted grace, you must give up yourselves to the power of that grace: When you have set lightly a life of holy Love to God, and the fruition of him in Glory, you *must* make it your treasure and delight, and your heart must be upon it, or you are undone: *Matth. 6. 21.* When you have made a feast of a Holy life, you *must* come about, and take *your selves* that course that you feasted at, though you be as much feasted at by others; yea, and make it the principal busines of your lives, or perish in hell under the vengeance of the Almighty, whose justice you provoked, and whose mercy you neglected: Choose you whether, but one of them will be your part. Even as *Saul* that was exceeding mad against *Believers*, and persecuted them even to *strange Cities*, *Acts 26. 10, 11.* was glad to become one of them himself though he suffered as much as he had caused them to suffer; and accounted it the greatest mercy of his life, that *God* vouchased him such a change, what ever it cost him.

IV. Quest. *But is nothing necessary but this One?* Are not other things also *Needfull* in their places?

Answ. I told you that other things are not other, so far as they stand in due subordination to this one, or are the parts of it: He that saith to a sick man, [You would do well if you had such a skilfull man for your *Physician*] doth not by these words intend to exclude his *Apothecary*, or his *medicines*, or the *taking* of them, or the *instruments* and *means* by which they are *applied*; but rather includeth and implyeth all these in the *One* thing mentioned to which they do subserve. So all *Gods graces*, and all the *means* of grace, and *Christian duties*, are contained or implied in the *One* thing *Necessary*, or supposed to it. Because it is *One* thing that is necessary as the *End*, therefore *many means* are necessary to the obtaining of it: Though there be also a kind of *unity* (as hath been shewed) among those means.

Quest. *But are not outward things also necessary?* Must we not have *food* and *rayment*? and must we not *labour* and *provide*

vide it, and take care for our families, and follow our callings? Must we not by lawfull means avoid reproach and poverty in the world?

Answ. In the way of *Duty* it is as necessary that we labour in our callings, and provide things honest, and subserve Gods providence for the maintenance of our selves and others; And the things of this life are *Needful* so far as *Life* is *needful*, that we may have *Time* and *strength* to do our works, and be supported while we seek the *One thing needful*. But that which is not *Necessary* for *itself*, but for another thing, is not *simply* or *principally Necessary*. So far as *Heaven* may be obtained, and the *work* of *Christianity* done without the accommodations of the flesh, so far these worldly things are *needless*. There is no *Necessity* that you be *Rich* or *Honourable*, or that you live in *Health* or *Wealth*; or that you escape the hatred, and reproach, and trouble of a malicious world: There is no *Necessity* that you should save your lives when Christ requireth them: For he that so saveth his life, shall lose it, *Math.* 16. 25. And that *Usefulness* (which you may in a lower sense call *Necessity*) that any of these things are of, is but in their respect to the *One thing Necessary*, as they are sanctified means to the service of God and our salvation: If your *daily bread* be to be called *Necessary*, it is not for *it self*, or for your *fleshy pleasure*, nor ultimately for your *life it self*, but to sustain your *life* while you are *seeking* after *life eternal*, and serving him that is the Lord of *life*: Your *Credit*, or *Honour*, or *Pleasure* in the world, are no further *Necessary* or *Usefull* to you, then they promote this great *End* for your selves or others: Nothing but *God* is *simply Necessary* for *himself*, and *Nothing else is any way truly Necessary but for him*.

And therefore as by *Necessity* of *precept* you must labour in your *Callings*, and seek provision for your selves and families, you must most carefully watch your *Hearts* that your *desires* and *labours* be not carnal, as tending only to *carnal ends*, but that you sincerely subject the things desired, to the *One thing necessary*, for which you must desire them; and therefore that you desire but such *measures* and *proportions* as are most suitable to that *End* which is only for *it self desirables*: Even *life it self* must not be desired *simply* and *ultimately* for *it self*, but only as a means to *eternal salvation*.

As you must pray but for your daily bread, and be content with food and rayment, so you must see, that these be but for better things ; even in order to the doing of the Will of God, the promoting of his Kingdom, and the Hallowing of his Name, which must be first and most desired. The order of your duty is, to seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and then other things are promised with it, Matth. 6. 33. and therefore for us, must be desired and sought.

And if your very food and life must be desired but for this everlasting End, then it is still but one thing that is necessary, and finally to be desired. For the Means is willed but with an imperfect willing, because not for it self ; and that only hath our full and perfect Love, which is Loved for it self : Even in the act of Love unto the Means, it is more properly the End that is Loved then the Means, and the Means is chosen for that End. So that you see that for all the necessity of creatures, and of diligence in our Callings, the truth is still clear, that it is only One thing that is truly Necessary.

Use.

TH E understanding is the subservient faculty, to let in that light, which may by direction and excitation, guide the will : Having shewed you the Truth, I am next to shew you how you may improve it, and so to apply it, as may best help you to apply it to your selves.

And if I should here fall upon things impertinent, or make it my work to claw your ears, or exalt my self in your esteem, by an unseasonable ostentation of learning or eloquence, or carry on any such corrupt design, while I should faithfully do the work of God, my Text it self would openly condemn me. If One thing be needful, it is that One that I must do my self, while I am exhorting you to do it : And woe be to me, if I should lay by that, to do any other unnecessary work, even to fish for the applause of Carnal wits, while my very subject is the Reproofs of Christ against a much more tolerable error.

And as to the manner of my admonition, if One thing be needful, I hope you will allow me to be as plain and serious as I can about this One : And my first address to you shall be for myself.

And I shall make it now my earnest request to you, that you will

Willbethink you how much you are concerned, to compare your arts and lives with this passage, and judge your selves by the word of God that is now before you : And for your own sakes sit seriously and faithfully, as passengers that are hasting to the great Assize. What say your Consciences, Sirs, to this Question? have you indeed lived in the world as men that believe that *One thing is necessary*? Hath this *One thing* had your chiefest care and labour, and have you chosen rather to neglect all other things then this? Look behind you, and judge of the course that you have taken by the light of this one text. I do not ask you Whether you have heard that *One thing is Necessary*: nor whether you have talked of it, and confessed it to be true: nor whether you have been called *Christians* by your selves and others, and have come to Church, and forborn those sins that would have most diminished your honour in the world: This is nothing to the question: Thus many thousands do, that were never acquainted with the *One thing Necessary*. Nor do I ask you, Whether you have used to allow God half an hours lip-service or formal rowsie prayer at night, when you have served the world and flesh all day? Nor whether you have been Religious on the by, and given God some lean devotion which cost you little, and which your flesh can spare without any great diminution or detriment in its ease, and honour, and profit, and sensual delights: nor whether you run to some kinde of duties of Religion, to make all whole, when you come from wilful reigning sin; and so make Religion a fortres to your lusts, to quiet your Consciences while you serve the flesh: I confess such a kind of Religiousness as this, the world is acquainted with: But this is unanswerable to the Rule before us.

But the question is, Whether this *One thing* hath been the *Treasure* and *Jewel* of your estimation, the *Darling* of your affections, the *prize* of your most diligent endeavours, and the *only felicity* of your souls?

Sirs, as lightly as you hear this question now, you will one day find that your lives, yea your salvation lyeth upon your answer to it. Can you say truly, as before the searcher of hearts, that it is he that hath had your hearts? That this *One thing* hath been more esteemed by you, than all the world besides? That other things have all stooped unto this *One*, and served under it? And that this hath had the *cream* of your heartiest affections.

and the drift of your endeavours, and hath been the matter the you have had first to do, and the thing for which you have liv'd in the world?

If this be not so, never talk of your Christianity for shame: Your Religion is *vain*, if this be not your Religion. Alas I know that we have all of us yet too much of the flesh, and are too cold in our affections, and too slow and uneven in our endeavours for our end: But yet for all that I must still tell you, (as I have often done because it is necessary) that here lyeth the difference between the truly sanctified soul, and all the hypocrites and half-Christians in the world: [Every true Christian is devoted unto God, and hath made an hearty and absolute resignation of himself and all that he hath unto him; and therefore loveth him with the superlative, most appreciative love, and serveth him with the best he hath, and thinks nothing too good or too dear for God, and for the attainment of his everlasting Rest: Christ hath the chiefest room in his heart, and the bent and drift of his life is for him: He studyeth how he may best serve and please him with his time, his interest, and all that he hath: and if he fall, as it is contrary to the habitual resolution of his soul, and contrary to the scope and current of his heart and life, so he riseth again by repentance with sorrow for his sin, and loathing of himself, and sincerely endeavours to amend, and goeth on resolutely in his holy course.] This is the state of every one that is in a state of life.

But for all hypocrites and half-Christians, their case is otherwise: The world and flesh is dearest to them, and highest in their practical estimation, though not in their speculative: and it hath their highest affections of Love and Delight, and the very bent and stream of heart and life, while God is served heartlessly on the by, for fear lest they be damned, when they can enjoy the world and sin no longer, and is put off with the leavings of the flesh, and hath no more of their hearts, their tongues, their time, their wealth, then it can spare: They ask their flesh how far they shall be Religious, and will go no further then will stand with their prosperity in the world: With the first and best they serve the flesh, and with the cheapest and the refuse they serve the Lord: When they go highest in their out-side carnal Religiousness, they go not beyond this hypocritical reserved state (and usually, as Cain, they hate Abel for offering a more acceptable sacrifice): God must take up with this from them,

without : They alway serve him with this reserve, though it not alwayes explice and discerned by them, [Provided that may go well with me in the world, and I may have some compre-
s proportion of honour, profit or pleasure, and Religion may not
lose me to be undone :] If God will not take them on these
ns, (as most certainly he never will) he must go look him
er servants : and so he will ; and make them know at last
to their sorrow, that he needed not their service, but it was
y that needed him, and the benefits of his service.

thought meet (though I have done it oft before) to give
this difference between the *Hypocrite* and the *sincere* : And
it is my earnest request unto you all, that you will presently
your souls to an account, and know which of these two
urses you have taken ; and which of these two is your own
dition.

If nature had made you such strangers to your selves, as that
were unable to answer such a question, I would never trouble
with it : but I suppose by faithful enquiry, you may know
much of your selves, if you are but willing. You know
re it is that you have dwelt, and what it is that you have been
ng in the world, and you can review the actions of your lives,
ugh they have been of smaller consequence. Why then may
not quickly know if you will, so great a thing, as *what hath
the very End and Business for which you have lived in the
old till now ?* Have you been running so long, and know not
what is the prize that you have run for ? Have you forgot the
and that you have been so long going on ? Have you been
sic all your daies till now, and know not about what or why
certainly this is a thing that may be known, if you are willing and
gent to know it : It is for one of these two that you have
ed, for the world, or for God : To please your flesh, or to
ase God and be saved : Either to make provision for *Earth or
aven* : Which of these is it ? Deal plainly with your selves ;
r your salvation is deeply concerned in the account.

Perhaps you will say, that *It was for both* : for as you have a
ul and a body, so you must look to both : Yea, but so as one
acknowledgeth, that *One thing is Needful* : As your body is but
e prison, the case, the servant of your souls ; so it must be pro-
ded for and used but as a servant, and maintained only in a fit-
s for its work : But the question is, Which of them hath bound
the

the preheminence ? Which hath had the life of your affections and endeavours ? Which of them was your *end* ? and about which hath been the chief busines that you have most carefully and diligently carryed on ? This is the great question.

You cannot have *two masters*, though you may have many *instruments* and *fellow-servants* : You cannot acceptably serve God, if you serve *Mammon* : *Every wicked man may do something in Religion*, and *every good man may do something that is contrary to Religion* : A carnal man may do something for God, and for his soul ; and a spiritual man ought to do something subordinately for his body, and too often, alas, doth something for it *inordinately* : But which bears the *way* ? and which is *first sought* ? and which *comes behind*, and hath but the *leavings* of the other ?

Be not deceived : God is not mocked : Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap : If you sow to the flesh, of the flesh you shall reap corruption : but if you sow to the spirit, of the spirit you shall reap everlasting life : Gal. 6.7, 8. *Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world (for themselves) : for if any man love the world, (with his chiefest Love) the Love of the Father is not in him, 1 John 2.15.* Is it not a wonder that any reasonable man can be such a stranger to himself, as not to know what he lives for, and what hath had his heart, and what hath been the principal busines of his life ? Some *by-matters* you may easily forget or over-look : but can you do so by your *end*, which hath been your *chiefest care and busines* ?

If indeed you no more know your *own minds*, nor what you have all this while been *abiding* in the world, ask those that you have conversed with, and judge by the *effects* and *signs* : Others can tell what you have most *seriously talked of* : They may conjecture by their *observation*, what you have most carefully sought, and resolutely adhered to. Whether it be God or the flesh ; this world or Heaven ? The *One thing Needful*, or the many troubling trifles in your way : It is like that *wise and godly observers* can help you to discern it ; though *sensualists* will but deceive you.

A mans *Love*, at least his *chiefest Love*, cannot be hid, but will appear in his *behaviour* : If you *Love God above the world*, you will seek him and his *Glory before the world* ; and if you do so, it may partly be discerned, if you have conversed with discerning men.

men ; Heaven and earth are not so like, nor the way to each of them so like, but it may partly be discerned which way men are going, and what they drive at in their daily course.

But I will urge you no further to the triall : I will take it for granted that your Consciences are telling many of you, that you have been troubled about many things, while the *One thing Needful* hath been neglected : And if indeed this be your case, suffer me to tell the guilty plainly, what it is that they have done.

1. Whatever you have been doing in the world, *you have lost your Time*, if you have not been seeking the *One thing necessary*. If you have been gathering riches, or growing up in honour as the rush groweth in the mire, (*Job 8. 11.*) or filling your purses or your barnes, or pleasing your fantasies and flesh ; you have but fooled away your time, and done just nothing, and much worse : *Nothing* is done, if the *One thing Necessary* be undone. Believe it, *Time* is a precious thing, and ought not to have been thus cast away. When you come to the end of it, the worst and proudest of you shall confess it is precious. Then O for one year more ! O for a few daies or hours more, to make sure of this *One thing*, which you should have spent your lives in making sure of. Will you then think thus ; and yet can you now afford to cast away twenty or thirty years upon *Nothing* ? If *Time* be worth *Nothing*, your *Lives* are worth *Nothing* : And why should a man desire to *Live for Nothing* ? You *Love* your *lives* too much, and yet will you so contempneuously cast them away ? He hath ~~lost~~ his *life*, who hath lost the *End of his life*. The loss of an hundred pound in money is not (to your selves) so great a loss, as the loss of a dayes or hours time. What then is the loss of so many years ? Did you ever well consider of this ? If you live a thousand years, it is all lost, if you have not spent it in making sure of the *One thing Necessary*. For is not that lost, and worse a thousand times then lost, that is spent in *crossing* the *End* that it is given for ? and which is no comfort, but terror in the review, and which leaveth no *scut*, but grief and disappointment ? Let me tell you, if you hold on thus unto the end, you will wish and wish a thousand times, either that you had never had an hours time, or else that you had had hearts, to have better perceived the worth and use of it, then to cast it away as you have done upon passing. It is but *One thing* that is worth your *Time* and *Lives*.

2. Whatsoever else you have been doing, *you have lost all your Labour with your Time*, if this *One thing Needful* have been neglected. No doubt you have been *busy* since you came into the world; but to little purpose. You might as well have been idle, as so laboriously doing nothing. No doubt many a journey you have rode and gone, and many a hard daies labour you have taken, and sharpened perhaps with care and grief: But you have lost it all, if it were an hundred times more, if it have not been laid out upon the *One thing necessary*.

And is it not a pittiful thing that men of reason, should vex themselves, and toil their bodies, and suffer hunger, and thirst, and weariness, and make such a stir and paddar in the world, and all for *nothing*, and in a *vain shew*? How many mornings have you risen to your labour, and how many dayes and years have you spent in it, and now it is all lost? How many thoughts and fears, and cares, have possessed and pestered your minds, and now they are all lost? Some of you have followed your trades, and some your husbandry, and some have run up and down after recreations: some of you have been scraping riches, and some contriving to keep up their reputation, and some to satisfie their appetites, and live in pleasure and contentment to the flesh; and now look back upon all that you have done and gotten, and tell your selves whether all this be not lost, yea alas much worse then lost: If you be not ready to pass this conclusion at the very heart, it is because your hearts are yet blinded and hardened in sin; but God will soon bring that to your hearts, that shall convince you of it. If God have made use of any worldly sensual person of you, for publick good, of Church or state, as men do of thorns for hedging to their lands, or of bryars to stop a gap, or of fire-wood to warm their family; yet as to any *desirable benefit to your selves*, I may well say that all your *Labour is lost*.

And this is not all; but the pains also that you have taken in your *formal hypocritical Religion*, your hearing, reading, receiving Sacraments, and pretended prayer, all the thoughts that ever you had of death, and judgement, and the life to come, and all that you have done with reservations and by halves for your own salvation, this also is all lost: Except as a *lesser measure of misery may go for gain*. If you miss of the *One thing necessary*, you do but lose your labour, whatever else you seem to gain.

A great stir you make in seeking for preferment, or dominion over others, or about your lands, your honours or your delights ; so great that your neighbours can scarce live quietly by you ; and the Kingdom cannot be quiet for some of you, nor your own consciences be quiet *within you* for the desperate work that you engage them in, which they know must be heard of another day : And when all is done, you will find you have been but hunting of a feather : You would see this now if God would open your eyes by grace : but if you miss of so seasonable an information, you will see it too late in the land of darkness : When death hath opened your eyes, and your impenitent souls do suddenly awake in another world, you will understand that you made all this stir but in your sleep : As busily and seriously as you acted the parts of Lords and Ladies, of Gentlemen, Tradesmen, or Husbandmen in the world, if you did not seriously and first do the work of *true Believers for the world to come*, you will then find too late that your labour is lost, and all was acted but as in a *dream*.

Do you believe this now, or do you not ? If you do , will you yet go on ? If you do not believe it, *shew me now* what you have gotten by all the stir that you have made in the world, that will follow you one step further then the grave, and that you can say shall be *your own to morrow* ? If you were to die this hour, will it be any lasting comfort to you, that you have laboured to be Rich or Honourable, or that you have attained it ? or that you had your glut of sensual delights ; and a merry life as to the fleshly pleasure as long as it would last ? Wilt you dye the *more comfortably* for any of this ? or *much the less* That yet you are alive, is the great mercy of God, and not to be ascribed to any of these : And when you cease to live, then these will be your grief and torment.

Beloved Hearers, I have no desire the Lord knows to discompose your minds, or to disquiet you with any molesting unnecessary scruples ; nor carelessly to dishonour either you or your employments : But I must needs say, that it is a dolefull case, that men in their wits, should spend a life of precious time, and also a great deal of care and labour, in doing nothing, and much worse then Nothing, when they have a work of everlasting consequences to do, and they know that the Devils chiefest hopes do consist in the success of these *diversions* !

I must seriously protest to you, that I am constrained by the word and teachings of God, and by undenyable reason it self, to look upon all the labour of your lives, the highest, and the busiest, but as the picking of straws, or playing with a feather, or riding upon a staff or a hobby-horse, or such like actions as children, fools or mad men use, as long as you mind not, and seek not after the *One thing necessary*. What ever they may be to others, they are no *wiser or better to your selves* : This is my judgement ; yea, this is the judgement of the Spirit of God : *Phil. 3. 8.* If *Paul* was not mistaken, your *gain* it self is to be accounted *Loss*, and all but *dung* in comparison of the *knowing and winning of Christ*, that you might be found in him, and have his *righteousness* : Think not the name of *dung* too base, when God himself hath written it here upon your highest endowments and honours, by his Spirit. And indeed what will they all do more then *dung* to procure you the favour of God, or the pardon of your sins ? If you offer him gold, will it do any more then if you offered him so much *dirt* ? Is not the prayer of a beggar heard as soon as of a Lord or *Gentlemen* ? If they would do any thing to buy you peace of Conscience, or everlasting life, or if they would but keep you alive on earth, I should not marvail at your course : But when they will do none of this, but make your way to Heaven more difficult, yea, your salvation a thing impossible while you thus live after the flesh (*Rom. 8. 13.*) how then can any easier sentence be past upon your choice ? Be you the *Greatest* or the *Wiseſt* in your own esteem, or in the esteem of others of your mind, *I believe, yea, I am ſure*, that you are all this while but laboriouſly idle, and honourably debasing your selves, and delightfully tormenting your selves, and wilely beſooling your selves, and thriftily undoing your selves for ever. I have reaſon to ſay that your rising and honourable and voluptuous imployments, are not only like childrens playing in the ſand, and making them houſes with ſticks and ſtones : but ſo much more pitiful, as the reaſon which you abuse exceedeth theirs. And could you all attain to be *Lords and Ladies*, I ſhould look upon you but as a King or Queen upon a *Chess-board*, as to any felicity that it bringeth to your selves; whatſoever the over-ruling providence of God may make of you for his *Churches*. The wile Merchant is he that ſeaking pearls doth find this O-

of greatest price, and setteth all that he hath and buyeth it even all the worldly treasures which you so highly value: Mat. 13. 45, 46. There is more true Riches in this *One pearl* then in a thousand loads of sand or dirt. If you will load your selves with mire and clay conceiting it to be your treasure, your backs will be broken before you will have enough to make you rich.

O Sirs, with what eyes, with what hearts do you use to read such passages of Christ that speak so plainly to you, as if he named you, and so piercingly as one would think should make you feel, Luke 12. 19, 20, 21. *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry: But God said to him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee; and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? so is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.*] Would you have Christ speak plainer to you: or else *where* apply it, that you may perceive he speaks to you? You have lost all the Labour of your lives; but that's not all.

3. But furthermore consider, that if the *One thing needfull* have been neglected, whatever else you have been doing, or whatever you have got, (unless as preparatory to this) you have not only *lost your labour*, but you have all this while been busily *undoing your selves, and labouring for your own perdition.*

If it were but the *loss* of your *Time and Labour*, you would then die but as *brutes*, and be as if you had never been ~~and~~ to those that have brutified themselves, this will seem more tolerable, then to live in *holiness to God*: But *now*, you have done much worse then this; You have not only been digging your own graves, but barring up against your selves the doors of heaven, and kindling the unquenchable fire to torment you; Mar. 9. 44.

I beseech you give me a considerate hearing, you ambitious Gentlemen, you covetous worldlings, and you that serve your lusts and pleasures! Do you think you had been doing the the work of wisemen, if you had all this while been burning your own fingers, or cutting your own flesh, or setting your own or your neighbours houses on fire? What would you have us call that man that would live in such imployments as

these, and yet would be accounted wise or honourable? Do I need to tell thee, as *Nathan* did *David*, that [*Thou art the man?*] Do I need in so plain a case to tell you, that you have been doing *worse*, (I speak not rashly) a *thousand times worse*, against your souls, then this would have been which is supposed to be only against your bodies! Alas self-destroyers, what do you mean? Did God send you hither on no better an errand than to kindle and blow the fire of his wrath, and fall into it when you have kindled it? Have you no better work in the world to do, then to prepare your selves a place in hell? and with a great deal of care, and cost, and stir, to labour for damnation, as if you were afraid of losing it?

I know you will say, [*God forbid, we hope better, we intend no such thing*] But alas the question is not, *What you intend*, but *what you are doing?* Not whether it be *your desire* that everlasting death should be the *wages of sin*, but whether it be the *Law and unchangeable will of God?* Rom. 6. 23. If you *seek not first God's Kingdom and his righteousness*, and look not after the *One thing needful*, with your chiefest *Estimation, Resolution, and Endeavours*, as sure as Christ is true, this will prove your case at last, though now you wink, and wilfully go on, and will not believe it: As sure as the *Gospel* is true, this is true. There are but two Ends, *Heaven and Hell*; and if you miss the former, you fall into the latter. *If you live after the flesh, you shall die*, whatever you imagine: and you must mortifie the *deeds of the flesh by the spirit*, if you will live, Rom. 8. 13. If you see a man cutting his own throat, and you ask him, [*What are you doing man! will you kill your self?*] and he answereth you, *No, God forbid*; I have no such meaning; *I will hope better*. Would you think that this would save his life? or that his *hopes and meanings* would prove him ever the wiser man? I tell you from the Word of God, it is one of the plainest truths that is there contained, that if you *value not, choose not, and seek not the One thing Needful above all other things*, whatsoever, you are all this while but sowing the seeds of endless misery, whose fruit you must reap in *outer darkness*, where will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, Mat. 8. 13. 42, 50. You are *treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath*, and the *revelation of the righteous judgement of God*, who will give to every man according to his works, Rom. 2. 3, 6. You are *sowing in pleasure to the flesh, in eating, and drinking, and mirth*,

mirth, and honour : but you shall reap in corruption, lamentation and woe. *Gal. 6. 7, 8. For woe to you that now laugh, for you shall mourn and weep : Woe to you that are rich (and have no better, but want the everlasting riches), for you have received your consolation : Woe to you that are full, (and yet are empty of Christ and grace) for you shall hunger, Luke 6. 24, 25.* These are the words of Christ himself ; and therefore true if Christ be true.

Yea more then this , let me have leave to tell you , (for why should I not tell you of your greatest folly , and that which is necessary for you to know ?) As long as you neglect the *One* thing necessary , you are acting the part of the *most deadly enemies* against your selves. No enemy that you have in all the world, could do that against you, as you do against your selves. You abhor the Devil ; and I blame you not ; for his malice and enmity deserveth it : But you do much worse against your selves then the Devil himself could ever do. To *tempt* you to sin is not so much as to *Consent to it and commit it.* He can but *entice* you , and not *constrain* you : It is *you* that are the neglecters of your Maker and Redeemer , and the wilful rejecters of your own felicity : Satan doth had enough against you by temptation ; but you do *worse* by *yielding and fanning* ; much worse then all the Devils in hell could do against you. For God hath not given all of them so much power over you , as he hath given you over your selves.

Lord, what a distracted case is the ungodly world in ! They hate any man else that they do but imagine is their enemy ! Though he do but diminish their worldly wealth or honour, they cannot forgive him : If a man give one of them a box on the ear, he cannot bear it : And as for the Devil, who is the common enemy, they spit at his name, and (think they) bless themselves from him : And yet these same men do spend all their care, and time, and labour, in doing *worse* against themselves, then all their enemies could do in earth or hell : and are *worse than Devils to themselves* ; and yet they never fall out with themselves for it ; but can forgive themselves as easily as if they did themselves no harm.

This is true, too true Sirs, as harsh as it seemeth to your ears ; And if it displease you to hear of it , bethink your selves what it is to do it ; and how God and all wise men must judge of you that

that have no more mercy on your selves : Certainly it is much worse to do it , then to tell you what you do . God tells men of their sin , and God doth nothing but what is good ; but it is *them-selves only* that commit it : I beseech you do but understand what you are doing , as long as the *One thing necessary* is neglected by you .

4. Consider also , that whatsoever else you have been doing in the world , if you have not done the *One thing needful* , you have *unman'd your selves* , and *lived below your Reason* , and in plain English , you have *lived as besides your wits* .

I give you no harder language then God himself hath frequently given you in his Word , and then you will shortly give your selves , if you repent not ; yea and sooner if you do repent . If you have (in this) the use of your Reason , you must needs know what you have your Reason for : And I beseech you tell me for what you have it , if not to serve and please your Maker , and prepare for your everlasting state ? Is it only that you may know how to plow and sow , and follow your trades and pleasure in the world , and satisfie your flesh a little while , and then die as the beasts that perish ? None of you , I suppose , will say so , that calls himself a Christian : If God had made you for no higher things then beasts , he would have given you no higher faculties and endowments . As they be not made to *enjoy God* , so they have no knowledge of him : he sendeth not his Word to them , and calleth them not to learn the knowledge of his will : But you know , or may know , that there is a God , and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him ; and are capable of Loving him , attending him , and serving him , and therefore of enjoying him : Beasts are not ruled by the hopes and fears of a life after this : For their nature and end do not require it . But men must be thus ruled , or else there can be no sufficient ruling of them , in an ordinary way : Which shews that the Nature of man is capable of the things which are the matter of their hopes and fears .

Verily Sirs , I think , as to any good that cometh by it , there is very little difference between having Reason , and having none , if we had nothing to do with it , but cunningly to lay up our food , and make provision for this corruptible flesh , and had not another life to mind . It were no such great difference , in my opinion , as it commonly goes for , whether we were ~~men~~ ~~or~~ dogs .

if it were only for the matters of this transitory life. For though I may not deny but yet ~~now~~ were the nobler creature, yet still the difference would be but graduall and small, as an Ape or Dog excells a Swine : And as to his Happiness, it is doubtful whether Man would not have the worst of it. For as brutes have not mans knowledge, so they have not his toil and trouble of mind, his care, and fear, and griefs, and disappointments : Nor have they so terrible fore-thoughts of death through all their lives, as man must have, much les such fears of what would follow after death.

And therefore I may boldly say, that you have thrown away your wits, and laid by your Reason as to the principal use of it, if you have forgot, or have not chyrly sought the One thing necessary. Where were your wits when a lump of flesh was preferred before immortal souls ? and when the trouble and dung of a transitory world, was more esteemed then God and endles Glory ? Where were your wits when you might have had Christ, and Life in him, and his pardoning, healing, sanctifying grace, and you had no mind of him, and were not sensible of your necessity, and past him by with as much neglect, as if you could have been saved without him ? When you might long ago have made sure of *Heaven* ; and now you are even ready to drop into *Hell*, and slay but for a Feaver, or Consumption, or some other disease to cut the thred, and turn the key, unless a speedy sound conversion shall yet prevent it. What have you done in all your life-time, that should make a wise man judge you *Reasonable* ? Is that your Reason to be *penny wise and pound foolish*, to be wise to do evil, and to have no knowledge to do good ? *Jerem. 4. 23.* To run up and down for I know not what, and to leave that undone that you were created and redeemed for ? Can you think that it is Reasonable to make such ado for the air of dying mens applause, and to be well thought of, or to live like Gentlemen, or to the contentment of a fleshly mind, when you know that you are just ready to pass out of this world into an endless life of Joy or Torment, (yea *certainly of torment*, if you thus hold on) ? Where all these things will afford you no relief or benefit ; but the memory of your course will be the fuell of your misery : Can that man be wise that damns his soul ? Can he deserve the name of a sober man, that will sell his salvation for so short, so small, so filthy a pleasure as sin affordeth ? Is he worthy the name

Or reputation of a wise man, that hath not wit enough to scape eternal fire ? nor wit enough to forbear laying hands upon himself, and doing all this againt his own soul ? What think you, is not the case here plain enough ?

Be not offended if I speak yet plainlyer to you ; for in a case so lamentable, how can we be too plain or serious ? Suppose you knew a Prince or Lord, that had an itch upon him, which the Physicion offereth speedily and easily to cure ; but he hath so much pleasure in scratching, that he doth not only refuse the cure, lest it deprive him of his delight, but he will give his Kingdom or Lordship to one that will scratch him but a little while, though he be sure to live a beggar after it all his dayes. I put it to your selves, What name you would give this man, or what esteem you would have of him : Do you think that *any ungodly worldly person* is wiser than *this man* ? Alas their case is *so much worse*, that there is *no comparison* : They are *more foolish* then your hearts can now conceive, or then I am able fully to express. You have now the itch of *Pride* and *Leaſt* ; and your throats must be pleased in your meats, and drinks ; and you itch after riches, and honour, and recreations ; and Christ telleth you by his Word, that these are but your *ſick deſires*, and that the *pleaſing* of them tends to kill you ; and he offereth you for nothing, a *ſafe*, and *certain*, and *speedy cure* : But you refuse it, and will not hearken to him : You *muſt be ſcratched* whatever it cost you : You *muſt have* your riches, and honour, and *fleſhly pleasure*, as the *felicity* which you cannot part with, though it *coſt* you your salvation. Though God be neglected, and his favour lost, and your souls be lost, and the *One thing needful* cast aside, you *muſt have* your carnal imaginations gratified : And is this your wisdom ? The Lord *bless* us from such a kind of wisdom.

Yet this is not the worst : I will shew you one strain more of the distraction of the ungodly world. If these men do but see *one person* of *an hundred* that are more diligent for *Heaven* then *earth*, to fall into *Melancholy*, or distress of soul ; or suppose it were into *ſome lots* of reason, they presently cry out against *Religion*, and *ſtrictness*, and *preciseness*, and making *ſo much ado* to be saved ; and say it is the way to *make men mad* : Hence comes the proverb of the Papists [*Spiritus Calvinianus est Spiritus melancholicus*] ; and of the prophane among our selves, that [*A Puritan is a Protestant frightened out of his wits*] : They

dare not study the *Scripture* so much, nor meddle with such high matters as their *salvation*, nor be so godly, nor meditate on the *world to come*, lest it should drive them out of their wits. O miserable men ! As if it were possible for you to be *more dangerously mad*, then you are already ! (Unless by growing unto greater wickedness !) Do you lay out your wit, and strength, and time, in feeding a corruptible body for the grave ; and spend your lives in running after your own shaddows, while your everlasting life is forgotten or neglected ! Do you sell your *Saviour* with *Judas* for a little money ; and change your part in *God and Glory*, for the brutish pleasures of sin for a season ? And are you afraid of altering this course of life, and turning to *God*, lest it should *make you mad* ? Lord, what a besetting thing is sin ? What a cunning cheater is the Devil ! What a deluded distracted sort of people are the ungodly ? Will you run from *God*, from *Christ*, from *Grace*, from mercy, from *Scripture*, from the godly, and from *Heaven* it self for fear of *being mad* ? Why what *greater madness* can you fear then this ? What *worse* is humane nature capable of ? Unless it be the addition of a further measure of the same, and unless it be to hold on in that way, and perfecte the contrary with such like aggravations of your madness, I know not of any *worse* than you should fear. Will you run to *Hell* to prove your selves to be in your wits ? Again I say, the *Lord* bles^s us from such a kind of wit. Nay Hell it self hath no such distractedness as yours : The difference between the *One thing needful*, and your *many things*, is there better, though *too late* understood ! Is *Loving God* the way to be *mad* ? and *loving the world and fleshly pleasures* the way to be *wise* ? Is *converting with God* in *bumble prayer*, and *believing his love*, and *loving him*, and *delighting in him*, and *speaking of his name*, and *word*, and *works unto his praise*, and *hoping to live with him for ever*, I say, *is this* (which is the *work of a Believer*) a liker course to make men *mad*, then *serving the Devil*, and *drudging in the world*, and *living under the curse of God*, and in continual danger of *damnation* ? What *men* are they, that dare *entertain* such horrid and *unreasonable suggestions* ?

I confess we are not unacquainted with the sadness and misery that some persons have contracted by *Religious employments*, and perhaps one of a thousand may lose their wits. But I

must tell you, all these following points, that will shew you this Religion is not to be blamed for it, nor avoided.

1. It is ordinarily persons of the *weaker sex*, or of *very weak brains* and *very strong passions*, that are *naturally inclined* to it, and are not able to bear any long and serious thoughts, about matters of that moment, which are apt to make the deepest impressions : But persons that naturally are of sound and calme dispositions, are seldom troubled with any such affects.

2. It is usually the case of persons that *mistake the nature of Religion*, though not in the *main*, yet in some particulars of great concernment : That study not sufficiently the Love of God declared to us in our Redeemer, but feed their griefs and troubles only by the thoughts of their own infirmities ; and that consider not that the chief part of Religion doth consist in Love, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, and in Thanksgiving and delightful praising our Creator. So that it is not long of *Religion* if men will leave out the *chief parts of Religion*, and make themselves a Religion of so much only as may breed their *groumble*.

3. And I must further tell you, that as I have had opportunity of knowing the state of as many troubled distempered minds, as any one of you whoever be be ; so I must needs bear witness, that I have met with *many* that have been *distracted* by *worldly cares*, or *sorrows*, or *discontentes*, for one that ever I knew distracted with the cares about the matter of their salvation. And yet though it be *worldly care* and *sorrow* that most commonly bringeth *death* and *madness*, you will not therefore give over your *Callings*, and resolve that you will meddle no more with *meat*, or *drink*, or *cloathes*, or *houses*, or *lands*, or *friends*, or *children* : Nay it were well if you would be brought to *moderation*, and taken off your *inordinate desires*.

4. And yet in the conclusion I must tell you, that, though I know that the loss of a mans understanding is a very grievous affliction, and such as I hope God will never lay upon me, yet I had a thousand times rather go *distracted* to *Bedlam* with the excessive care about my salvation, then be one of you that *cast away the care of your salvation* for fear of being *distracted*, and will go among the *infernal Bedlams* into hell for fear of being *mad*. The height of your *carnal wisdom* is more *deplorable* then their *distraction*. For God will *condemn* no man

man because he is *distraught*, nor so much as blame him for it, (unless as it is the fruit of sin,) no more then he will condemn or blame an *Idiot* or a *beast*, because they have no use of reason; If *David* had been as he feigned himself to be, 1 Sam. 21. 13, 14. it would not have cast him out of Gods favour, so far as *one* sin did, much less so far as the ungodly are. A man may go to *Heaven* from *such a madness*. But *yon* that have *Reason* for the *world*, but none for *God*; that are *wise* to do *evil*, that have *wit* to *destroy* your *selves* and *serve* the *flesh*, but none to look after your *recovery* and *salvation*, its *you* that shall have the *stripes*, the *many*, the *great*, the *endless stripes*. You that have so much *wit* as that *you* glory in it, and think *your selves* *wiser* then the *rest* of the *world*, and yet have not *wit* to *know*, and *love*, and *serve* *your maker*: nor to *value* and *seek* first the *One* *thing necessary*, it is *you* that will prove the miserable *fools*.

If you had not had a *natural capacity* of *understanding*, you had had no *sin*: But now you have no *cloak* for your *sin*, when you have the *worldly wisdom* which is *foolishness* with *God*, and have a *sinning*, *self-destroying* *wit*, and are *wilfully void* of the *wisdom* that should save *you*, (3 Cor. 1. 25. & 3. 19. Jer. 8. 9.) when you have not a *necessitated*, but a *voluntary* *distraction*: and *this is your condemnation*, that *Light is come into the world*, and *you have loved darkness rather then Light*, because *your deeds were evil*, John 3. 19.

If you think this *wilfull* and *senseless* *neglect* of the *One thing needfull* is not a *sufficient* *evidence* to prove that miserable *distraction* which I charge upon *you*, Will you but believe *your Maker*, and let the *word* of *God* be *Judge* between *us*, and mark what *language* *is* *giveth* to *such* as *I* now *describe* 2 Thess. 3. 2. Jer. 4. 22. Eccles. 7. 26. 3 Pet. 2. 12. Psalm 92. 6. & 94. 8. Jer. 10. 8. 14. Deut. 32. 6. Psalm 73. 3. 22. 2 Sam. 14. 10. In these *places* *your course* hath no better *tides*, than *unreasonable*, *foolish*, *brutish*, *sinful*, *etc*. even from the *God* of *Wisdom* *himself*, who is the *firstest* to give *you* the *character* *than* *you* *deserve*. When *you* have truly *considered* of *your way*, if indeed *you* *find* *them* *you* *have* *dealt* *like wise men*, hold on, and say so at the last, when *you* have eaten the *fruit* of *your* *doing*, and have seen the *End*.

5. Furthermore Consider, that what ever else *you* *have* *been* *doing*

doing in the world, if the *one thing necessary* be yet undone, you have lost and abused all the mercies that God hath bestowed on you: Many a thousand precious mercies have been given you: And to what use, but to help you to everlasting mercy, and to prevent your everlasting misery! This is the End, and this is the Life and excellency of all your mercies: For all present mercies have the Nature of a Means to a further End: And the Goodness and nature of the Means consisteth in its fitness to promote the End. And therefore you have lost all the Mercies that you have received, if you are never the nearer your End for them; and if they have not promoted the Love of God, and your salvation. You have had health, and strength, and time, and peace, and liberty, and some of you also wealth and honour in the world. But you have lost them all, if your salvation be not furthered by them. Many a preservation you have had, when others have been cut off before your faces, and many a deliverance from dangers known or unknown, and much of the fruit of that Patience of God, which hath till now attended you in your sin: Many a sermon you have heard, and many a warning you have had, and you have been planted in Gods Vineyard, and daily watered with the Ordinances of grace: But all these are *lost* if the *One thing necessary* hath been neglected: Nothing in this world doth you good indeed, any further than it promoteth your *Everlasting good*. And do you think that you have dealt *kindly* or *justly* with God, to deal so contemptuously with all his mercies, as to cast them away, and tread them under foot? When you ~~want~~ but food, or rayment, or liberty or health, you value them and pray for them; and when you have them, what do you with them, but throw them as in the channel, and sacrifice them to your lusts and enemies? When Death looketh you in the face, you begin to know the worth of *Time*, and then O what would you not give for a little more, and that God would try you a few years longer? And when you have *Time*, what do you wish it, but serve the Devil, and cast it away for nothing, and spend it in preparing for everlasting sorrows? How can you for shame cry to God for Mercy in your next distress, when you have contemptuously thrown away the Mercies of twenty or thirty, or forty years already: If your own children should ask you for meat or drink, and when they have it should throw it to the dogs;

dogs ; or ask you for money , and cast it into the dirt , and do thus an hundred and an hundred times over , would you go on to give it them because they cry for it ?

O Sirs, that you could but use your Reason in the matters for which it was given you by your Maker ! Either time and mercy is worth something, or nothing : If it be worth nothing , never beg for it , and never be sad when it is taken from you . Why make you such a stir for that which is nothing worth ? (I mean your corporal mercies , for spiritual mercies you can be too well content to be without) But if they be *worth any thing* , why do you cast them away , and make no better use of them ? What good do you with them ? or what good do they do you ? Believe it , sinners , God doth not despise his mercies as you do . He will not alway give you meat , and drink , and health , and strength , and life , to play with , and do nothing with . He will teach you better to value them before he hath done with you . Not that he thinks them too good for you ; but he would have them be *better* to you then you will let them be . He would have every bit you eat , to be used to strengthen you in your walk to heaven , and every hour of your time to help you towards eternal happiness , and every present mercy to further your everlasting mercy , that so by the improvement , their value may be advanced , and they may be mercies indeed to you . Be ruled by God , and you shall receive more in one mercy , then you do now in a thousand . But if you will *do nothing* with them , blame him not if he take them from you , and leave you destitute of what you knew not how to use .

Nay your sin is greater then merely to *cast away your mercies* : You do not only *lose* them , but turn them all into a *curse* , and undo your *souls* with that which is given for the *sustentation* of your *bodies* : While you know no better use of mercies , then to please your *senses* , and accommodate the *flesh* , and forget the *One thing needful* , which is the *End of all* , you turn them all into sin , and fight against God by them , and strengthen his enemy and your own , and block up your way to Heaven by them , and are sure up wrath for the dreadful day , when your *wrath* shall be a *witness* against you , and shall eat your flesh as it were fire ; *James* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Rom. 2. 5.* You contemptuously cast that bread to dogs , which he giveth you to supply your own necessities . You treacherously carry over his provision to the enemy . Consider this ,

this, you that say you hope to be saved, because God is merciful: You have found indeed that God is merciful, by large experience: But if you do not learn, and quickly learn to make a better use of his mercies, *abused mercy* will prove your everlasting misery: O what a reckoning will you have? What a load to press you down to Hell? Unless you would have used them better, it had been easier for you, if these temporal mercies had been denied you: Can that man look to be saved by *mercy*, that would not be intreated to consent that *mercy* should save him in the day of salvation? in the accepted time? but served the Devil with those very mercies that would have saved him? God sendeth you his mercies to kill your sins, and sanctifie you, and engage you to himself; and if you will feed your sins with them, and make them your idols, and forsake God for them, and be false to him, to your Covenant, and your duty, and neglect that *One thing* for which he gave them to you, you do not only lose them, but turn them to a curse. And, alas, poor sinners, what will you have to fly to, to trust in, or to comfort you, when *mercy* abused hath not only forsaken you, but falls upon you as a mountain, and feedeth your aggravated endless misery?

6. Moreover, whilst you neglect the *One thing necessary*, you neglect Christ himself, and reject the saving benefit of his blood-shed, and refuse the healing work of his Spirit, and the precious benefits which he hath offered you in the Gospel. And how can you escape if you neglect so great salvation? *Hob. 2. 3.* How will you be saved, when you refuse the only Saviour? There is indeed enough in Christ to heal and save the humbled soul, that thirsteth for his righteousness and salvation, and valueth and seeketh him as a Saviour: and if you would thus come to him, you might have life, *John 5. 40.* But whiles you give your selves to please the flesh, and follow the world, and look so little after Christ, or after the ends and benefits of his sufferings and grace, Christ is as no Christ to you; and Grace is as no Grace to you, and the Gospel is as no Gospel to you; and you will be never the more saved, then if there had no Saviour ever come into the world, or there had never Grace been given to the world, or there had never been promise made, or Gospel preached to the world: For Christ will not save them that continue to neglect him, and set light by all the mercy that he offereth, and the salvation which he hath purchased, and do not esteem and use him as

a Saviour, and cannot find enough in God and Glory, to take their hearts from the pleasures and idols of the flesh. If Christ would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and you would not (Matth. 23.37.) you will be as far from being saved by him, as if you had never heard of his name.

And yet that is not all : If you prevent it not by true Conversion, you will wish a thousand and a thousand times, that this were all : But there is *worse than this* : For Christ will not leave a man of you as he finds you : If you are so far in love with worldly wealth and fleshly pleasure, that you can taste no sweetness in his Grace, and see no desirable glory in his Kingdom, he will make you taste the bitterness of his wrath, and feel the weight of his severest justice. The most *compassionate* Saviour is the most *dreadful Judge*, to those that will not be saved by his grace. It will be easier for *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* in the day of Judgement, then for those that were the obstinate refusers of his Gospel, Matth. 6. 11, 12. *He that despised Moses Law dyed without mercy, under two or three witnesses ; of how much severer punishment shall he be thought worthy, that hath trodden under foot the son of God ?* Heb. 10. 28, 29. See therefore that ye refuse not him that speaketh : For if they escaped not that refused him that spake on earth, how much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven ? Heb. 12. 23.

7. As long as you neglect the *One thing Needful*, whatever good conceits of *your selves* you have entertained, and whatever hopes, or peace, or comfort, you have built upon those conceits, they are all but meer delusions and irrational, like the laughter of a mad man, that is no comfort to the standers by, who know that it is but the fruit of his distemper, and maketh him an object of more compassion. What wisdom is it to look high and carry it gallantly in the world, when you know not but vengeance may overtake you the next hour ? Alas man, thou hast to do with God : Though thou see him not, it is he that upholds thee, and observeth thee, and looketh for Love and Duty from thee, and will be *Glorified by thee*, or thou shalt dearly answer it : God will not be neglected and abused at so cheap a rate as softish Infidels imagine. *He despiseth thee, if thou despise him, 1 Sam. 2. 30. and thou despisest him, if thou despise his Messengers, and Word, and Ways, Luke 10. 16. 1 Thes. 4. 8. And if God despise thee, what*

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honour is it to thee to be stout-hearted and high in thy own conceit, and to live applauded by thy self and others? Think of your selves as well as you will, God counteth you worse then the basest brutes, as long as you make your selves so, by neglecting the *One thing* for which you have your reason. When you swagger it out in the world, you do but gingle your fetters, and glory in your shame, *Phil. 3. 18, 19.* While fools admire you, God abhorreth you; he *laugheth you to scorn*, and *hath you in derision*, as he expresseth himself after the manner of men, *Prov. 1. 26. 27, 28. Psalm 2. 4.* When you are proud of your riches, or honour with such as your selves, you are but proud of the bonds of your captivity, *2 Tim. 2. 26.* Though you live as carelesly and merrily, and laugh as heartily, and sport your selves as fearlessly as if all were safe, and nothing ailed you, yet your mirth is but your madness, *Eccles. 7. 4, 6. and 2. 2.* and God seeth that your day (a woful day) *is coming*, *Psalm 37. 13.* and you know not but you may the next hour be tormented in hell, that this hour are so pleasant and confident on earth. And is this a desirable or rational kind of mirth? Did you but now foresee the end; did you see what you *must* see, or *feel* a little of what you *must* feel, you would presently be far from mirth or laughter, it would spoil your sport, and turn your tune to doleful lamentations. O short unsatisfactory pleasure! O endless, easelss woe, how quickly wilt thou surprize them that little dream of such a change! You say Religion is a Melancholy thing, but verily your condition is so much worse then melancholy, that it may make a man melancholy to think of men in so sad a case. If any thing in the world will make a man melancholy, methinks it should be to stand in your unhappy state, and thence to look into eternity, and to think of your enmity to heaven, and that you have no part in Christ, no title to his Kingdom, and to think what haste you are making to your infernal home, and how fast the wheels of night and day do hurry your unprepared souls to Judgement, and that your judgement *lingreth not*, and your damnation *slumbreth not*, as the Holy Ghost speaketh, *2 Pet. 2. 3.* Whether you sleep or wake, be surest *sleepeth not*. In a word, to neglect the *One thing needful*, is to neglect Heaven it self and your salvation, to neglect Heaven is to lose it; and lose Heaven and lose all. And what comfort can the fore-thoughts of life everlasting afford a soul in a state of sin, that is passing to everlasting misery? And

what comfort can any thing in this transitory life, afford the man that hath no matter of comfort in the life to come, yea that must there live in endless sorrows ? O let me not taste of that frantick and unreasonable mirth, that tendeth to such heaviness, and driveth away those wise recovering thoughts that are necessary to prevent it ! For the Lords sake , and for your souls sake, all you that negle~~ct~~ the *One thing needful*, will you but search the Scripture, and soberly consider whether all this be not certain truth : and if it be , how it should affect you, and what a change in reason it should make upon you ! I have done with this Use : If you have taken a survey of your own hearts and lives , will you next for the exercising of your compassion look a little further.

Use 2.

IF *One thing be Needful*, and the neglect of this be so unreasonable, so unmanly , and so dangerous , as we have seen it proved, then what an object of compassion and lamentation is the distracted world ? Look upon this text of Scripture, and look also upon the course of the earth , and consider of the disagreement , and whether it be not still as before the flood, that all the imaginations of mans heart are evil continually : *Gen. 6. 5.* were it but possible for a man to see the affections and motions of all the world at once, as God seeth them, what a pitiful sight would it be ? What a stir do they make , alas poor souls , for they know not what ? while they forget, or slight, or hate the *One thing necessary*. What a heap of gadding ants should we see , that do nothing but gather sticks and straw ? Look among persons of every rank, in Citie and Countrey, and look into the families about you , and see what trade it is that they are most busily driving on, whether it be for Heaven or earth ? and whether you can discern by their care and labours that they understand what is the *One thing necessary* ? They are as busie as bees, but not for honey, but in spinning such a spiders web, as the hand some of death will presently sweep down, *Job 8. 14.* They labour hard ; but for what ? for the food that perisheth , and not for that which will endure to everlasting life. *John 6. 37.* They are diligent seekers ; but for what ? Not ~~all~~ for God, No thing

dom and Righteousness; but for that which they might have had as an addition to their blessedness. *Math. 6. 33.* They are still doing; but what are they doing? even undoing themselves by running away from God, to hunt after the perishing pleasures of the world: Instead of providing for the life to come, they are making provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts, *Rom. 13. 14.* Some of them hear the Word of God; but they choak it presently by the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this life; *Luke 8. 14.* They are careful and troubled about many things, but the *One thing* that should be all to them, is cast by as if it were nothing. Providing for the flesh, and minding the world, is the employment of their lives. They trouble themselves with it, and trouble their families, and nearest relations, and oft-times trouble the whole Towns or places where they live; so that unless we will let them have their bone to themselves, and give them our cloak when they have taken our coat, and say as *Job 31. 16.* *sheth* [*Let him take all*] there is no living quietly by us. A dog at his carrion, or a swine in his trough, is not more greedy then many of these sensualists, that labour of the *Caninus appetitus* to their trash: But to Holiness they have no appetite, and are worse then indifferent to the things that are in themselves desirable: They have no covetousness for the things which God hath commanded earnestly to covet, *1 Cor. 12. 31.* They have no desire but hunger and thirst after righteousness, that a very little *bone* will satisfie them: Here they are pleading always for consideration, and against too much, and too earnest, and too long: And all is too much with them that is above stark naught, or dead hypocrisy: and all is too earnest and too long that would make Religion seem a business, or would engage them to seem serious in their own profession, or put them past jest in the worship of God, and the matters of their salvation. Let but their servants or children neglect their worldly business, (which I confess they should not do) and they shall hear of it with both ears: But if they sin against God, or neglect his Word or Worship, they shall meet with more patience then *Eli's* sons did: A cold reproof is usually the best; and it is well if they be not encouraged in their sin; and if a child or servant that begins to be serious for salvation, be not rebuked, derided, and hindred by them. If on their days of labour they over-sleep themselves, they shall be sure to be called up to work, (and good reason); but when do they call them

them up to **prayer**? When do they urge them to read, or consider, or conferr of the things that concern their everlasting life? The Lords own day, which is appointed to be set apart for matters of this nature, is wasted in idleness or worldly talk. Come at any time into their company, and you may have talk enough, and too much, of news, or of other mens matters, of their worldly business, sports and pleasures: But about God and their salvation, they have so little to say, and that so heartlessly and on the by, as if they were things that belonged not to their care and duty, and no whit concerned them. Talk with them about the renovation of the soul, and the nature of holiness, and the life to come, and you shall find them almost as dumb as a fish, or as dry as a chip, or as erroneous or insensible as those that speak but words by rote, to shew you how little they favour or mind the things of the Spirit. The most understand not matters of this nature, nor much desire or care to understand them: If one would teach them personally, they are too old to be catechized or to learn, though not too old to be ignorant of the matters which they were made for, and are preserved for in the world: They are too wise to learn to be wise, and too good to be taught how to be good, though not too wise to follow the seducements of the Devil in the world, nor too good to be the slaves of Satan, and the masters and enemies of goodness. If they do any thing which they call *serving of God*, it is some cold and heartless use of words, because they themselves believe that for all their sins they shall be saved, so that God will call that a serving of their sins and abomination, which they call *serving of God*. Some of them will confess that Holiness is good; but they hope God will be merciful to them without it: And some do so hate it, that it is a displeasing irksom thing to them, to hear any serious discourse of holiness, and they detest and deride those as fanatick troublesome Precisions, that diligently seek the *One thing necessary*. So that if the Belief of the most may be judged by their practices, we may confidently say, that they do not practically believe that ever they shall be brought to Judgement, or that there is any Heaven or Hell to be expected, and that their confession of the truth of the holy Scriptures, and their profession of the Articles of the Christian Faith, are no proofs that they heartily take them to be true. Who can be such a stranger to the world, as not to see that this is the case of the greatest part of men? And which is

worst of all, they go on in this course against all that can be said to them, and will give no impartial considerate hearing to the truth which would recover them to their wits, but live as if it would be a felicity to them in Hell, to think that they came thither by wilful resolution, and in despight of the remedy. And is it not a sad prospect to a man that believeth the Word of God, and the life to come, to look upon such a distracted world? O Sirs, if Jesus Christ be wise that condemneth their course and them, then certainly all these men are fools: And if Christ knew what he said, we must needs think that they know not what they do. O what is the matter that reasonable men should have no more use of their reason in things of such importance, then thus to neglect their everlasting state for a thing of naught? Did God make them unreasonable, or give them understandings uncapable of things of such high concernment? Or rather, have they not drowned their reason in sensuality, and wilfully poise them with malicious aversnes to God and Holiness? What is the matter that the *One thing needful* is no more regarded? Hath God made them believe that they shall dwell here for ever, and never die? No surely, this is so gross a lye, that the Devil himself cannot make them believe it. They know that they must die, for surely they are alive: And yet they prepare not, but waste their days in scraping in this dunghill world, as if they were to live no further. Did God never warn them by a Sermon, or two, to prepare for the life which they must live for ever? If they did by a time, but they would take no warning. Did God never tell them that after this life there is another, where they must live in endless joy or torment? Yes, and they professed that they did believe it: They heard it an hundred times over, till they were weary of hearing it. Did God make them believe that they shall die like beasts that have no further to go, nor any other life to live? No: if they do believe this, it is the Devil and not God that maketh them believe it. What then is the matter that the *One thing needful* is no more regarded? Hath God shut up their souls in desperation, so that it is in vain to seek, or trouble themselves for that of which there is no hope? Oh no! his compassion hath provided them a full remedy: by the death of his Son Redemption procured, and he hath made them a deed of gift, of Christ, and pardon, and eternal life, and tendered it to them, that upon their acceptance it may be theirs. Many a time hath he offered this

mercy to them ; and many a time hath he urged them to accept it : He hath set before them life and death, and given them their choice, and directed and perswaded them to choose aright : Impossibility of attainment is not their hinderance ; for Mercy be-seecheth and importaneth them to accept it , and grace and salvation are brought unto their hands. O wonderful ! What then is left to take off a reasonable creature, from minding and preferring its own everlasting great concernments ? Is it because they have done their work already, and having made sure of heaven, have time to turn themselves to other matters ? Alas no : the most are far from any such assurance ; and have done but little to procure it. If they were to die this hour , they know not where their souls shall be the next : And if death even now should lay its terrible hands upon them , they have no other comfort then to yield unto necessity, and leave their souls by a short security , to ~~yield~~ ^{the} passage of their unavoidable change : Unless they are ~~comme~~ by such presumptuous self-deceit, which the next moment after death will vanish , and never return unto them more. *Job 8. 13, 14. & 11. 20. & 27. 8. Pro. 11. 7.*

This is the case of the miserable world ; but they have not hearts to consider themselves, nor can we make them willing to be delivered, because we cannot make them know their case. If a man fall into a pit, we need not spend all the day to perswade him that he is there, and to be willing to be helpt out of it : But with these fleshly miserable souls , the time that should be spent by themselves and us for their recovery, must be spent to make them believe that they are lost ; and when all is done, we leave them lost, and have lost our labour , because we cannot prevail with them to believe it. Drown they will and perish everlastingily, because the time that should be spent in saving them , must be spent in making them know that they are sinking , and after all they will not believe it ; and therefore will not stay hold on the hand that is stretched forth to pull them out. The Narrative of the savage people of *Soldania* doth notably represent their state : Those people live naked, and feed upon the carion-like carcasses of beasts, and hang the stinking guts about their necks for ornament , and wear hats made of the dung , and carve their skins; and will not change their loathsome customs : Some of them being drawn into our Ships, were carried away for *England*: when they came to *London*, and saw our stately buildings, and cloathing, and

and provisions , they were observed to fight much, which was thought to have been in compassion of their miserable Countrey, which so much differed from ours : When they had stayed long among us, and got so much acquaintance with our civility, and order, and all that belongs to the life of man , as that they were thought fit to communicate it to their Countrey-men , the next Voyage they were brought back, and set on shoare in their own Countrey, to draw some of the rest to come into the Ships, and see and enjoy what they had done (who had purposely been used as might gnost content them) : But as soon as they were landed, they leapt for joy , and cryed , *Soldania* , and cast away their cloathes, and came again in the sight of our Ships, with dung on their heads, and guts hanging about their necks , triumphing in their fordid nakednes. Just so do worldly sensual men , in the matters of salvation : If against their wills they are carryed into cleaner wayes and company, and the beauty of holines, and the joyes of heaven are opened to them , they are aweary of it all the while ; and when we expect they should delight themselves in the felicity that is opened to them, and draw their old acquaintance to it, and be utterly ashamed of their former base and sinful state , they are gone when the next temptation comes , and return with the dog unto their vomit, and with the wretched Swine to wallow in the mire, 2 Pet. 2. 21, 22. and glory in their filth and shame , and only mind their earthly things , Phil. 3. 18.

Use 3.

BY this time you may see your selves that the disease of flouners is in their own hearts, and it is that that must be healed if they will be saved. But what should we do to get into those hearts, to search your sores, and work the cure ? I come now to the principal part of my message to you ; but will you indeed certain it, if it prove it self to be from God ? How the case standeth with mankind , you have heard in my Text from Christ himself ? How *One thing is needful* ; and how the busie-idle world is diverted from this *One thing*, by many needless troublous things to their own destruction : If hence I warn you of your danger, and tell you of your duty, and exhort you to take another counte-

then you have done, I hope you will confess I do but what is needfull both for you and me, and what you have no reason to contradict. Come then, for the Lords sake, and let us treat practically and successfully about so great a busines; and make something of it before we leave it; and end not till we amend what we find amiss. What course then will you take for the time to come? Will you go on to trouble your selves about *Many things*, and neglect the *One thing needful* as you have done? Dare you harbour such purpose? Or dare you stifle those thoughts and motions that would tend to better purposes? Or may I not hope that the Light hath shamed your sleepiness and works of darkness, and that you are grieved at the heart for the sinful negligence of heart and life, and resolved now to be new men? For Gods sake Resolve, Sirs. What will you do? Waver not, but Resolve: Its more then a thousand lives that lyeth on your Resolution: I come to you this day as the Minister of the great Pastor of the flock, that spake these words, not only to acquaint you, if you know not, or to remember you if you know, that *One thing is needful*; but also with authority to command you in his name, to Value it, to Love it, to Choose it, to seek it, and labour for it as the *One thing needful*. What say you, will you or will you not? This unspeakable mercy I offer you from the Lord: He is willing to put up at your hands, all that is past, and to lay all your sins on the score of Christ, and freely to forgive you through the virtue of his blood, if you will now at last bethink you better, and come to Christ, and live as men that know what they have to do: If you will but see your former folly, and heartily bewail it, and set your hearts on the *One thing needful*, he will encourage you, and help you, and bid you welcome, and number you with his sons, though you have lived as his enemies. Though you have lived like Swine and Serpents, he will put you into his bosom, if you will but be washed and changed by his grace. Though you have set more by your worldly riches then by his glory, and have set more by the favour of mortal man, then by his favour, and though you have set more by your bellies, and your brutish pleasures, and little toyes, then you have done by everlasting life, he will yet be merciful to you, and put up all these indignities at your hands, and take you into his dearest love, if you will but New become new creatures, and give your hearts to him that made them, and seek that first that is worth the finding, and lose not the

the rest of your lives and labour upon unprofitable things. What can you say against this offer? Is it not unconceivable and unspeakable mercy? O what would the damned give for such an offer? O what would you your selves give another day for such an offer, if you now neglect it? What say you then, will you accept of this offer of mercy while it may be had, and close with Grace, while Grace would save you, or will you not? As ever you look for mercy in the hour of your distress, when nothing but mercy can stand your souls in any stead, take mercy now while it may be had: Refuse it not when it is offered you, as you would not be refused by it when Hell and Desparation would devour you. If you slight it because it is *free*, you slight it because it is *great*, and therefore greatly to be valued. Think not hereafter to have it at your beck, if you neglect it now when it seeks for your acceptance. Do not say, I will a little longer keep my sins, and a little longer enjoy my pleasures, for I can have Christ's offer at any time before I die. O little dost thou know what a stab such a trifling purpose may give to the very heart of all thy hopes and happiness! and how terribly God may make thee know, how ill he taketh thy unthankfulness and contempt! and how dear one other week of sinful pleasure may cost thy soul? In the name of God I warn you, do not so despise everlasting happiness! Do not so trample on the blood of Christ, if you would be saved by it: Do not abuse the Spirit of Grace, if you would be sanctified by it: Play not any longer with the consuming fire, the wrath of a jealous and Almighty God: Jest not with damnation. Though Grace be now offered you, it will not be at your command: Despise this motion, and you may be out of hearing before the next. What can you expect, if you will slight such mercy, but either that Death should shortly bring you to your reckoning, or that God should leave you to your selves, and give you up to the hardness of your hearts: And if you will needs choose the world, and fleshly pleasure, and God and Glory shall be thus contemptuously past by, you may take your choice, and see what you will get by it: But remember what an offer you had this day, and that heaven was once within your reach, and that it might have been yours for ever if you would.

But because I am loth to leave you so, I will try by some such Arguments as the Reason of man must needs approve, Whether

yet you may not be brought to your selves ; and yield to grace ; that you may be saved. And they shall be the Arguments that lie before you here in the Text.

1. R Emember, it is *Necessity* that is pleaded with you in my Text. *One thing is Necessary*. *Necessity*, and your own *Necessity*, is such an Argument, as one would think of it self should turn the scales, and fully resolve you, and put you past any further deliberation or delay. If *Necessity*, your own *Necessity*, and so great *Necessity* to so great an *End*, will not prevail with you, What will ? *Necessity* is that *ingens telum* that natural reason taketh to be unresistible. Men think they may do almost any thing, if they can say *Necessity* commandeth it : *Omnem legem frangit, magnum illud humana imbecillitatis patrocinium*, faith Seneca. What is it that *Necessity* seemeth not sufficient to justifie with the most ? And we will grant the Argument to be undenyable, if it be from absolute *Necessity* indeed, and if men will not dream that it is more *Necessity* to be *Rich*, or *Honourable*, or to *Live*, then to be *Holy*, and to be *Blessed* with God, and to please him that created them. *Ubi necessitas incumbit, non ultra disputandum est, sed celerrime & fortiter agendum*. Words signifie nothing against *Necessity* : *Reason* is but hindering troublesom folly, when it pleadeth against *Necessity*. *Omni arte, omne ratione efficacior necessitas. Curt.* In worldly matters, how quick-sighted, how resolute, how active is *Necessity* ? What conquerable difficulties will it not overcome ? What labour will it not endure, if it have but the encouragement of *hope* ? And yet this *Necessity* is indeed no true *Necessity* at all. For that which is *Necessary* but to my credit, or estate, or health, or life, can be no more *Necessity* then is my credit, and estate, and health, and life it self. When men do but fancy a *Necessity* where there is none, yet that will carry them through thick and thin. But O Sirs, you have a real undenyable *Necessity* to be *Holy*, and to set your selves to the work of your salvation ; such a *Necessity* as is founded in your *Nature*, and laid on you by your *Maker*, and as all the true Reason in the world will confess to be indispensable *Necessity*.

Faxis ut libent quod est necesse.

Make no more words then, but *Resolve* and *firre* when it

is a matter that *must* be done. It is pity and shame that the Am-
ableness of God and Holiness will not prevail with you of them-
selves : But if you cannot yet perceive them to be *Delectable* ;
acknowledge them to be *Necessary*. Be ashamed that pretended
Necessity for the *Body*, should be more powerful with others ,
then real *Necessity* for *salvation* is with you. Look upon almost
all the travel and labour that is under the Sun, and all the dili-
gence that is used here in the world, and consider Whether it be
not a thousand fold smaller *Necessity* then I am now pleading with
you, that setteth almost all on work ? The Rich will not toil and
labour, but will take their ease, because they think they are under
no *Necessity* : but the poor will labour, because they *must* :
Though the command of God to Rich and poor should make
them equally diligent in their several callings , in obedience to
their Creator , yet many thousands that labour all the year in
obedience to their own *Necessities*, would soon give it over and
take their ease, if they could but be well maintained without it ;
notwithstanding the commands of God : And the poor that re-
proach the rich for *idleness* , would be idle themselves if they
were but rich. The Tradesman followeth his trade, and the Hul-
bandman his hard labour all the year : and What reason will they
give you, if you ask them why they do it, but this, *We cannot live
else* : *We must do it to maintain our selves and families*. And is
not the reason a thousand times stronger for our souls ? May we
not better say, [*We must please God, and set our hearts on the life
to come, and mind and seek the One thing needful, whatever be-
comes of other things; for we cannot live else; we cannot be saved
else.*]

Necessity makes the Traveller trudge from morning till night ;
and the Carryer to follow his horses through fair and foul from
year to year ; it makes some dig into the bowells of the earth ,
in mines and cole-pits ; and some to hale Barges ; and some to
cut through the terrible Ocean , and venture their lives among
the raging waves and storms ; and some even to beg their bread
in rags from door to door : And O what will not *Necessity* do
that can be done ? And yet how many thousands trifle or do no-
thing for their souls , as if there were no *Necessity* of being
saved ; or no *Necessity* of being *Holy* that we may be saved.
When alas, all the *Necessity* in the world, is no necessity at all, in
comparison of this. You must beg, or starve, or famish , if you
do

do not work : But you must burn in Hell, if with fear and diligence you work not out your own salvation, *Phil. 2. 12.* (for all that it is God that worketh in you). You must lie in prison if your debts be not paid : But you will be cast into outer darkness, if by the pardon of your sins, you be not discharged from your debt to God. You may become beggars if you be idle in your Callings : But you will be the prisoners of Hell, and shut out of all the Happiness of the Saints, if you labour not for the food that doth not perish, and strive not to enter in at the strait gate, and give not diligence to make your Calling and Election sure. *John 6. 27. Matth. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24. 2 Pet. 1. 10.* You must suffer hunger and nakedness, if you have not food and rayment : But you must suffer everlastingly the wrath of God, if you have not the *One thing necessary.* You will be the scorn and laughing-stock of men, if you fall under their contempt and lose your honour : But you will be the enemies of God, and hated by him, if you continue to contemn his grace.

O had you but seen the Life to come, you would say, There is a *Necessity* of attaining it ! Had you been one hour in Hell, you would think that there is a *Necessity* of escaping it, and that there is no *Necessity* to this.

What say you to all this ? Is it not of *Truth* and *Weight* ? Can you *deny it* ? Or should you *make light of it* ? None but an *Infidel* can *deny it* ; and none but a dead-hearted sinner can *make light of it*. Believe the Word of God, and the *Truth* of it will be past question with you : Consider but that you are *men* that have *immortal souls* ; and the *weight* of it will appear inestimable to you ; above contempt ; above neglect. Believe it Sirs, you may as well see without light, and breath without air, and be supported without earth, or live without food, as be saved without *Holiness*, or happy without the *One thing necessary*. *Heb. 12. 14. John 3. 3, 5. Matth. 18. 3.* And when this is resolved of by God, and established as his standing Law, and he hath told it you so oft and plainly, for any man now to say, [*I will yet hope for better ; I hope to be saved on easier terms, without all this ado*] is no better then to set his face against the God of heaven, and instead of believing God, to believe the contradiction of his own ungodly heart ; and to hope to be saved whether God will or not ; and to give the lie to his Creator, under the pretence of *trust*, and *hope* : It is indeed to hope for *impossibilities* : To be

Saved without *Holiness*, is to see without eyes, and to live without life: And who is so foolish as to *hope* for this? Few of you are so unreasonable as to hope for a crop at harvest, without plowing or sowing; or for a house without building; or for strength without eating and drinking; or to sleep and play, when you have nothing to maintain your families, and say, You hope that God will maintain both you and them. And yet this were a far wiser kind of *hope*, than to *hope* to be saved without the *One thing necessary* to salvation; and without a heart that is set upon it, and a life that is employed for it. It is the Holy Ghost that calleth you to answer the question, *Heb. 2.3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* If you know how, then enter the lists with God, and dispute the case with him: How will you escape, if you be neglecters of the *Only way* that he hath provided for your escape? Is there any device or shift of wit, that can procure your escape? Is there any power or interest of men or Angels that can procure your escape? How can that be done, that God hath resolved shall not be?

I beseech you now, beloved Hearers, to remember this urgent motive of *Necessity*, and use it when you are tempted to delay or trifle about the business of your salvation, as if it were some indifferent needless thing. Without worldly Riches you may be rich in faith: Without worldly honours, you may have the honour of being the Sons of God: and without worldly pleasures, or health, or life, you may have the favour of God and Life eternal: But without the *One thing needful*, you have nothing that is durably or satisfactorily good, but are undone for ever. Without the things of the world, you will live in want for a little while, and then you will be equal to the greatest Princes: But without *this One thing*, you must live in endless woe and misery, and be far worse than the basest prisoner in the Dungeon, or than the toades and vermine that lie in the uncleanest holes or sinks of the earth. And yet dare you delay another day before you make so Necessary a change? You have hearts of stone, if your *Own Necessity* thus urged upon your Consideration will not awake you. If your hearts were not dead within you, while you hear these things, one would think *such a Necessity* should make you feel, and resolve upon a speedy change, and make you stir in the diligent performance. Can you go on in security, in negligence and worldliness, when you hear of your *Necessity*, that you

must change, or you are lost for ever? O stupid souls, that will not be moved with *Necessity* of everlasting consequence! O what hath God, or Christ, or heaven, or holiness, done against these men, that will rather lie in Hell for ever, then they will live in the love and service of this God, and in the practice of holiness, and in the hopes of Heaven! How meet are they for Hell, that will venture upon it deliberately and upon choice, to scape the trouble of living in the holy Love, delight and service of the ever blessed God? that is, to scape the trouble of Heaven. Is it so great a sin to shut up the bowels of compassion against our brother in his need? *1 John 3. 17.* And is it not more unnatural to deny compassion to your selves in your own necessity? and in the greatest necessity? O poor sinners, remember your *Necessities*! Your own, your great, your absolute *Necessities*: When you hear men that gather alms cry [*Remember the poor*] doth it make thee think [*What a poor necessitous soul have I to remember?*] As *Paul* saith of Preaching to others, I may say much more to you, of minding and practising this great work of your salvation [*Necessity is laid upon you, and woe to you if you do it not.*] *1 Cor. 9. 16.* Woe to you that ever you were born, and that ever you were reasonable creatures, or rather, that ever you so abused your Reason, if you neglect and miss of the One thing necessary.

I know you have other wants to be supplyed, and other matters to look after in the world: But alas, how small are they! God will supply all your other wants, if you will first and faithfully look after this. *Phil. 4. 19.* *Math. 6. 33.* *1 Pet. 3. 7.* Or if life and all go, you will find all in heaven: But if you miss of this One thing, nothing in the world can make supply, or do you good. And though now your *feeling* tell you not these things, alas how quickly will God make you *feel*, and teach you by that sensible way that you would needs be taught by?

Awake then you sluggish careless souls! Your house over your heads is on a flame! The hand of God is lifted up! If you love your selves, prevent the stroke: Vengeance is at your backs: The wrath of God pursueth your sin; and woe to you if he find it upon you when he overtaketh you: Away with it speedily: Up and be gone, return to God; make Christ and mercy your friend in time, if you love your lives. The Judge is coming, for all that you have heard of it so long, till you believe it not: *Then shall*

shall shortly see the Majesty of his appearance, and the dreadful glory of his face ; and yet do you not begin to look about you, and to make ready for such a day ? Yea, before that day , your separated souls shall begin to reap as you have sowed here. Though now the partition that stands between you and the world to come, do keep unbelievers strange to the things that most concern them ; yet Death will quickly find a Portal to let you in ; and then sinners you will find such doings there, as you little thought of, or at least did sensibly regard on earth. Before your Corpse can be wrapt up in your Winding-sheets, you will see and feel that which will tell you to the quick , that *One thing was necessary*. If you do die without this *One thing Necessary*, before your friends can have finished your funerals, your souls will have taken up their places among the Devils in endless torment and despair : and all the wealth, and honour, and pleasure, that the world afforded you, will not ease you. This is sad , but it is true, Sirs ; for God hath spoken it.

Up therefore and bestir you for the life of your souls. *Necessity* will awake the sluggard. *Necessity* we say , will break stone walls : The proudest will stoop when they perceive *Necessity*. The most sloathful will bestir them when they feel *Necessity*. The most careless will look about them and be industrious in *Necessity*. *Necessity* is called the *Tyrant* of the world, that can make men do any thing that is possible to be done. And yet cannot *Necessity* make you cast away your sins , and take up a Holy and Heavenly life ? *Necessity* will make men fare hard, and work hard, and travel hard , and go bare , and suffer much ; yea it will even cut off a leg or an arm to save their lives : And yet can it not prevail with reasonable creatures , to cast away the poison of a fruitless, filthy, deceitful sin ? and to be up and doing for their salvation ! O poor souls ! Is there, think you, a greater *Necessity* of your *sin* then of your *salvation* ? and of pleasing your flesh for a little time, then of pleasing the Lord, and escaping everlasting misery ? I beseech you consider your own *Necessities*.

2. **C**onsider also, that, *It is but One thing which God hath made Necessary for you*. And I shewed you before , how that the means themselves though they are many, have a certain unity in

in their harmony and connexion, and as they center in the ultimate end, which is *One*. If God had sent you upon such a multitude of errands as the flesh and the world doth; and set you on such disagreeing contrary works, then you had been excusable, if you had neglected some of them: But he hath sent you but upon *One* errand, even to seek and make sure of everlasting life; and therefore if you neglect *this One*, you are unexcuseable. If the world be divided into a thousand opinions, or go a thousand several wayes, they may thank themselves who are the Authors of this confusion; but God is no cause of it, or friend to it. He hath made them but *One work*, and set them but *One way* to heaven, and given them *One Master*, Jesus Christ, to teach that way; and written but *One Law*, even his holy Scripture, to be their sure and constant guide: And if men would stick to *this One Master*, and not make flesh and blood their master, or the multitude their master, or the *Rulers* of the world, or the *custom* of their fore-fathers the master of their faith: and if they would stick to *this One Word* of God, and not run after the *Traditions* of men, they would not be in such a maze, nor of so many minds as now they are: But they do in their doctrines as they do in their practice: God hath marked them out but *One way* in the holy Scripture, which is the *good* and the *sure* way, the way that *Peter* and *Paul* and the rest of the Apostles went to heaven in, and *this way* will not serve mens turns, but they will run an hundred waies instead of *this One*: and they must make *new wayes* which the Apostles of Christ were never acquainted with.

If God had loaded your *memories* with *many things*, you might possibly have said [*we cannot remember them all*] but he hath set you *finally* but one thing to remember, even to lay hold on everlasting life, and press on to the Crown that is set before you; and he hath an ill memory that cannot remember *One thing*, and such a thing as this is too.

It may be you are *Ignorant* and cannot learn *many things*; but God hath set you but *this One thing* to learn as of *Absolute Necessity*: And he is dull indeed that cannot learn *one thing*, and such a thing too. If you cannot understand the depths of Sciences, nor reach the height of learning that others do attain, yet learn *this One thing*, to know God in the Redeemer; and if you know *this*, you know all. *Paul* was not only contented with this knowledge, but resolved to know *nothing else but Christ and him crucified*; that

is, Nothing that is wholly alien to this : Nothing but what doth keep its due subordination to this, and so may be reduced to the knowledge of Christ, 1 Cor. 2. 2 He would not own any other knowledge as knowledge, but disclaimeth it as Ignorance and Foolishness, though it seemed wisdom in the eyes of the world, 1 Cor. 3. 19. This seeming knowledge and wisdom of the world, that is totally disjunct from Christ, is part of the [all] that we must sell to buy the Pearl, if we will obtain it. Matth. 13. 46. and part of the [all things] which Paul accounted dung and loss, that he might win Christ and be found in him. Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10. For they that know not this One thing, know nothing, whatsoever they may seem to know: and they that would go beyond the knowledge of Christ, and think it too low for them, and trouble their brains and the Church with their speculations, they do not know indeed, but dream. And if they would see their faces in the glass of Scripture. 1 Tim. 6. 4. They are proud knowing nothing, but doting about Questions and strifes of words; whence cometh envy, railing, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth.

Moreover, if your strength be so small that it will not suffice for every thing, at least you should lay it out on this One thing.

Your time, I know, is small, your lives are short, and therefore you may say, We have not time for many things; but when you have but One thing given you to do, that must be done, you may sure find time for this for which you have your time.

If you set your servant to work, and bid him be sure to do one thing, whatever else he do, you will not take it well if that one shall be neglected. If you send him on an errand, and bid him be sure to remember one thing, whatsoever he forget, you will not take it well if he forget that one. If you trust him but with one thing, and bid him be sure to keep that one, you will not take it well if that be lost; especially if he wilfully throw it away.

O consider, Whether this be not your case. God hath sent you into this world but on one errand, even to make sure of everlasting life, and will you neglect that one? He hath trusted you with one thing, and will you cast away that one? He hath given you one lesson to learn, even to please him and to save your souls, and will you not learn and remember that one? If you had for-

got your food and raiment, or forgot the houses you dwell in, it had been a small matter in comparison : but to forget that *one work* that must be done, that *one friend* that you must alwayes trust to, that *one place* that you must live in for ever, this is most unreasonable ; and when you have recovered your understandings, you shall confess it to be so.

3. Consider further, that this *one thing is that good part* : You see it is here called so. [*Mary hath chosen that good part*] Other things *seem good to sense*, and to *perverted reason* that is blinded by sense ; but this is it that *seemeth good to reason illuminated by the spirit of Faith*. Other things *seem good for a while*, but this is *that good that will still be good*.

I may not only say, that the Good of other things is *small* in comparison of this, but that it is *nothing at all*, but as it is related unto this. This is *that good* that makes all things else good that are good. As they come from God, and reveal God to us, and lead us up to God, and are means to this eternal life, so they are *good* ; but otherwise there is *no goodness* in them.

And therefore, seeing that *Goodness* is naturally the object of mans will, one would think you should quickly be resolved of your choice. *Sensual good*, is but a *nominal good*, if it reach not higher. All that you hunt after so eagerly in the world, is nothing but real vanity and *veritas*, a shadow of good, a picture of profit, a dream of *desire*, which one frown of God will turn into astonishing horror and despair. Like a tender flowre that is nipt with one frosty night, or withered with one scorching day ; but it is only this *one thing*, that is the solid, substantial, and enduring good. The pleasure of the flesh is a *good* that is common to men with brutes ; *They can eat, and drink, and play, and satisfie their lusts, and master one another as well as you*. But it is the *spiritual good* that is proper to a reasonable creature. The pleasure of the flesh may melt you into foolish mirth, and make you like drunken men, that are gallant fellows in their own eyes, while sober men are ashamed of them, or pity them, or they become a laughing-stock to others. But it is *this One thing only* which is *that Good* which *wisdom it self will justify*. A man that is tickled may *laugh* more then he that is possessed of a Kingdom, or hath the *desires* of his heart ; but he is not therefore to be ac-

counted the *happier man*, nor will any wise man so account him. Oh Sirs, one would think, that to men that have read and heard what we have done, and have had that experience which we have had, these things should be plain and past all question; and that spiritual, heavenly, everlasting things should be confessed by us all to be *that good part* that should possess all the fervent Desires of the soul.

But oh that we could see the Truth of this Belief in the choice of your wills, and the drift of your endeavours. If God would open your eyes and shew you things as they are, and save you from your wilful blindness, you would then see which is the *better part*, and you would be ashamed that ever you should make any question of it. That is *the good part*, which beareth the most lively *Image of God*, which is goodness it self, yea which possesseth *us* of this good: That is the *good part* which will make *us* good, and not that which deceiveth *us* and makes *us* worse: That is the *good part* which the *wisest* and *best* men judge to be so, yea which *God himself* doth judge to be so; and not that which the most blind deluded sinners do judge the best: That is the *good part* which is best at last, and which is an enduring *Good*, and not that which perisheth in the using, and fyleth from *us* when we have greatest need: That is the *good part* which all men will say is good in the Conclusion, which the wicked themselves that are now of another mind, will confess at last to be the best; and not that which is commended only in prosperity, while the *irensy* or dream of sensuality doth beguile *men*, and which they will all cry out against at last. If you would know which is the best part, take counzel of *God*, and see what he saith, and ask men of wisdom and of greatest experience, that have *tried both*, and men that have *staid the end*, and seen what fleshly pleasures, and profits, and honours can do for them: For how can men make so true a judgement that do not either *stay the end*, or else *foresee the end by faith*? Do not take their judgements that are drunk with their sensual delights, and that will confess they must repent themselves, and therefore confess they must be of another mind: Take not their judgements that neither have seen nor yet foreseen the end; the worst is yet to come with them: Their states and minds are near a change: The day is near when *they will say, that heaven was the better part*, and be convinced by *pnsishment*, that would not be convinced by *infrntion*.

Surely Sirs, it is so easie a Question to reason it self, where sin hath not blinded it, whether God or the world be the better part, that one would think there should be left no room for doubting. Dare any of you speak out and say, that earth is better then heaven, or sin then grace, or temporal pleasure then eternal happiness? I think you dare not: Shame will forbid you, and Conscience will contradict you, if you should say so: And will you commend God by your words, and discommend him by your lives? Will you say, heaven is best, and yet seek the world before it; and not let it have the best of your affections and endeavours? Shall it be highest in your mouths, and lowest in your hearts and lives? Shall it have the first place in your prayers, and the last in your labours? Why then you commend God but to his dishonour, and your condemnation: You extoll heaven and heavenly things but to the confusion of your own faces, that your own confessions may be brought in hereafter as witnesses against you. In the name of God therefore I charge you, if you know which is the better part, condemn not your selves by making choice against your knowledge.

4. Consider also, that this good part is offered you, and you have your choice, whether God or the world, whether heaven or earth shall be your portion.

It is not Purchasing, or proper meriting, but choosing the good part, that you are called to: It is not [Mary hath purchased or merited the better part] but [hath chosen the better part].

Two things are here contained. 1. That it is not matter of Impossibility that you are called to; you are not excluded from the hopes of salvation, by any exceptions that God hath put in against you, in his promise, but it is conditionally made as well to you as to others.

2. And the condition is not any thing unreasonable, but your own consent. Christ and salvation are offered to your choice: If you will but prefer them before the trifles of the world, you may have them. The door of Grace is open to you as well as to others; if you will but enter you may live: you are not left in a remediless case, nor given over to desperation: you cannot say, [Abstaining and Believing will do me no good; we cannot have Christ though we were never so willing:] You cannot say, [We would join him

Christ and his Spirit to sanctifie us, but we cannot : we are willing to be his Disciples, but he is not willing to accept us, and to be our Saviour] you cannot say so, and say truly : you cannot say he is set to sale to you, and that he expecteth such a price as you are unable to give ; for you are called to take him freely ; and though this be sometimes called buying , yet it is a buying without money and without price, Isa. 55. 1; 2, 3, 4. And though you must sell all you have for this unvaluable pearl, Matth. 13. 46. yet that is but a Metaphorical selling , a parting with your sin and fleshly pleasure, as troubles and impediments that would keep you from salvation : As a sick man sells his diseases for health ; or at least, as he hath health by forbearing some hurtful things that please him : Or as a prisoner purchaseth the liberty that is freely given him, by consenting to come forth and cast off his fetters. Your hands are full of dirt, and God offers you gold, and you cannot receive it till you throw away the dirt. This is your Purchase : You give God nothing as a valuable price for his mercy, but you throw away the sin that is inconsistent with your happiness. Still I shall tell you, [you may have Christ if you will] pleasures and profits are flattering you to your destruction, and God calls you from them, and offereth you his son and everlasting life , and intreateth you to accept them. And here you have your choiche. The offer is, *whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely*, Rev. 22. 17. And if you will but chuse that happiness that is offered you, and Christ the way to that happiness , all the world cannot bereave you of your choice : It is brought to your hand and urged on you. You have now your choice, whether you will have Christ or the flesh , grace or sin , heaven or hell : As you chuse, so you shall have : And if you miss of life , it will be because you did not chuse it : Even because you would not come to Christ that you might have life, John 3. 40. and would not have him to rule over you, Rom. 19. 27. and would not have the Lord indeed for your God, Rom. 8. 1. 11. and did not chuse the fear of the Lord, Prov. 1. 29. yea, when Christ would have gathered you, you would not be gathered, Matth. 23. 37. It is this turning away of the simple that doth slay them , because they refuse when Christ calls them, and regard not when he stretcheth forth his hand, but set at nought his counsel, and will have none of his reproof, Prov. 1. 24, 25, 32. See therefore that you refuse not him that speaketh ; for if you turn away from him that speaketh from heaven , and neglect or make

make light of so great salvation, how do you think it possible you should escape ? Heb. 12. 23. & 2. 3. Mat. 22. 5.

But perhaps some of you will think to excuse your selves for want of Free-will, and say, How is it in our choice when God must give us to will and to do ? and we can do nothing of our selves ? have we free-will or power to chuse the better part ? You must not set up the power or will of man too high.

Ans. No : its you that would set up your wills too high, in making us believe that you are not wilfully ungodly and impenitent, but omit all the good and do all the evil that you do, because you cannot help it. You cannot but know that he is the sinner to be blamed and punished, that *Can* and *Will not*, rather then he that would but *cannot do good*, and forbear the contrary. You know that it is *wilfulness*, and not *unwilling impotency* that the venome of malice and naughtiness lyeth in ; and therefore you are excusing your wills, and laying all upon your *Impotency*, which is but to excuse your faults. I would make you know the baseness of your wills, and that it is long of your baseness that you are like to be undone, if grace prevent it not by your through Conversion. I do not say that you have any power, but what you have from God, but I say you have the Natural and Legal Power, and more then Power, even a *Grant and Offer* of such a *mercy* from God : You have humane faculties, and leave, and offers, and entreaties, and you may have Christ and life as he is offered if you will. When I say, *It is in your choice*, I do not say that you have the *wit* or the *heart* to make a right choice. No : if you had but so much *wit* and *grace*, I need not use all these words to you, to perswade you to chuse the better part. Your Wills are free from any force that God puts upon them to determine them to sin ; or from any force that *Satan* or any enemy you have, can use to determine them to sin : All they can do is morally to entice you. God doth not make you sin. If you chuse your death, and forsake your own mercy, it is not God that determineth your Wills to make this choice. Yea, he commandeth, and perswadeth, and urgeth you to make a better choice : And though Satan tempt you, he can do no more. You have so much power, that you may have Christ if you will : you cannot say, I am truly willing to have Christ and cannot. Thus much *free-will* undoubtedly you have.

But I must confess that your *Wills* are not free from the mis-guidings

guiding of a blinded mind, nor from the seduction of a sensual inclination; nor from a base and wicked disposition of your own. This kind of free-will you shew us that you have not. But is your wickedness your excuse? and is your wilfulness your innocence? What then can be culpable?

Sirs, I would not have you abuse God, and befool your selves with names and words, saying, *You have not power and free-will,* as if you might thus excuse your sin: I have opened the matter in plain terms to you, that children may understand it, though learned men have endeavoured to obscure it. *God giveth you your choice,* though your own wickedness do binder you from chusing aright. *You have a price in your hands,* but fools have not a heart to their own good, *Prov. 17. 16.* I know you want both wisdom and a sanctified will; and I know that your minds and wills are contrarily disposed. You need not tell me that you are wilful and wicked, when there must be so many words spoken, and so many Books written, and so much mercy and patience of God, and so many afflictions from his hand, and all will not serve to make you chuse the better part. But if you were willing, if you were truly willing, the principal part of the work were done: For if you are willing, *Christ is willing;* and if *Christ be willing,* and *you be willing,* what can hinder your salvation?

Having laid this ground-work from the plain Word of God, methinks I may with this advantage now plead the case, even with common Reason. *One thing is needful;* the *Good part* is that *one;* and this is tendered to you by the Lord: What is it then that you do make choice of? and what do yo resolve? *May* you have Christ, and Pardon, and Everlasting life, and will you not have them? Shall it be said of you another day, that you had your choice, whether you would have Christ and life, or sin and death; and you chose destruction and refused life? I beseech thee Reader, whosoever thou art that readest these lines, that thou wouldst a little turn thine ears to God, and withdraw thy self from the delusions of the flesh and world, and use thy reason for thy everlasting peace; and consider with thy self what a dreadful thing it will be, if thou be everlastingly shut out of the presence of God, upon thy own choice? And if thou lose thy part in Christ, and Pardon, and everlasting Glory upon thy own choice? And if thou must lie in Hell fire, and Conscience must tell thee there for ever, *Then hast but the fruit of thine own choice;* *Heaven was set open*

to me as well as others. I had life, and time, and roaching, and persuasions as well as others; but I chose the pleasure of sin for a season, though I was told and assured that hell would follow, and now I have that which I made choice of; and taste but the fruit of my own wilfulness ! Will not such gripes of conscience be a hellish torment of themselves, and an intolerable vexation, if thou hadst no more ? Had you rather have sin then Christ and Holiness ? Alas, I see by your lives you had ! But had you rather have Hell then God and Glory ? If not, then chuse not the way to Hell. Why do you give God such good words, and prefer your sin when you have done, before him ? Why do you speak so well of Christ and Heaven, and yet refuse them ? Why do you speak so ill of sin and the world, and yet chuse them to the loss of your salvation ? Surely if you were soundly perswaded that Christ is better then the world, and holiness then sin, you would chuse that which you say is the best : For that which men think indeed to be the best, and best for them, they will chuse and seek after. And therefore, when you have said all that you can in commendation of Grace and a holy life, no wise man will believe that you are heartily perswaded of the Truth of what you say, as long as you run away from Christ, and follow the flesh, and take that course that is contrary to your profession. For that which you like best you will certainly chuse and seek with the greatest care and diligence. Now you have your choice ; if you would have the better part, now choose it.

5. I Have one other Motive yet from the text to perswade you to chuse the better part. If you chuse it, it shall never be taken from you. You hear this is the Resolution of Christ himself concerning Marie's choice, and that which is spoken of her will be true of you, if you make the same choice. If all the enemies you have in the world should endeavour to deprive you of Christ and your salvation, they cannot do it against your choice. If by Power or by Policy they would rob you of your portion, they cannot do it : For which way should they do it ? They cannot turn the heart of God against you, nor make him break his Covenant with you, nor repent him of his Grand Calling which he hath extended to you. For he is unchangeable, and loves you with an everlasting love. *Mal. 3. 6. Jer. 31. 3. Isa. 44. 8. Jer. 33. 20, 21, 23. 50. 5. Rom. 11. 29.* They cannot under-

mine the rock that you are built upon, nor batter the fortres of your souls, nor overcome your great Preserver and Defence, nor take you out of the hands of Christ. *Psal. 73. 26. & 31. 2, 3. & 62. 2. & 59. 9, 16. Job. 10. 28.* Cast not away the salvation that's offered you, and then never fear least it be taken from you. See that you chuse the better part, and resolutely chuse it, and it will be certainly your own for ever. For man cannot take it from you, nor Devils cannot take it from you, and God will not take it from you. Rust and moths will not corrupt this Treasure; nor can thieves break through and steal it from you, *Mat. 6. 19, 20.*

But you cannot lay so of worldly riches. If you chuse to be *Lords and Princes* on the earth, you cannot have your choice; but if you could, you cannot keep it. If you chuse the wealth and credit of the world, and were sure to get it, you were as sure to leave it: For naked you came into the world, and naked you must go out, *Job 1. 21.* If you chuse your ease, and mirth, and pleasure, these will be taken from you: If you chuse the satisfying of your fleshly desires, and all the delight and prosperity that the world can afford you, yet all must be taken from you; Yea quickly and easily taken from you. Alas! one stroak of an Apoplexy, or a few fits of a Fever, or the breaking of a small vein, or many hundred of the like effectual means, are ready at the beck of God, to take you from all that you have gathered for your flesh: And then, whose shall all these things be? None of yours, I am sure; nor will they redeem your souls from death or hell. *Luke 12. 20. Psalm 49. 7.* If you be in honour, you abid not in it, but are (as to your body) as the beasts that perish. If you think to perpetuate your houses and your names, this your way is but your folly, though your posterity go on to approve your sayings, and succeed you in your sins. *Psalm 49. 11, 12.* The worldly wise man doth perish with the fool: as sheep they are laid in the grave, Death shall feed on them, and the upright shall have Dominion over them in the morning, ver. 10, 14. They shall soon be cast down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. *Psal. 37. 2.* I have seen the wicked in great prosperity, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree; yet he passed away, and to be wau not, yea I sought him, but he could not be found. v. 35, 36.

You think it a fine thing to have the fulness of the creature, to be esteemed with the highest, and fed and clothed with the best, and fare deliciously every day, as the rich man, *Luke 16. 19.*

bath he not paid dear think you for his riches and pleasure by this time ? His feeding and fulness was quickly at an end ; but his torment is not yet ended, nor ever will be. You think it a brave thing to clamber up to riches, and that which you call greatness and honour in the world : but how quickly, how terribly must you come down ! Go into the Sanctuary of God and understand your end : Surely God hath set them in slippery places, and casteth them down into destruction : How are they brought to desolation as in a moment ! They are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awakeneth, so at the awakening, shall their Image (or shadow of honour) be despised, Psalm 73. 17, 18, 19, 20.

How short is the pleasure, and how long is the pain ! How short is the honour, and how long is the shame ! What is it under the Sun that is everlasting ? You have friends, but will they dwell with you here for ever ? You have houses, but how long will you stay in them ? It is but as yesterday since your houses had other Inhabitants, and your Towns and Countries other Inhabitants, and where are they all now ? You have health, but how soon will you consume in sickness ? You have life, but how soon will it end in death ? You have the pleasure of sin ; you say unto your selves Eat, drink, and be merrv, but how soon will all the mirth be mar'd, and turned into sadness, everlasting sadness ! When you hear, *Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul, and then whose shall these things be ? Luke 12. 20.*

Oh miserable wretch ! If thou hadst chosen God instead of thy sin, and the everlasting Kingdom instead of this world, thou wouldst not have been thus cast off in thy extremity : God would have stuck better to thee : Heaven would have proyed a more durable Inheritance : For it is a Kingdom that cannot be moved, Heb. 12. 28. The day is near when thy despairing soul must take up this lamentation, [My dearest friends are now forsaking me, I must part with all that I laboured for, and delighted in. I have drunk up all my part of pleasure, and there is no more left. My merry-company, and honours, and recreations are past and gone ; I shall eat, and drink, and sport no more : but God would not have used me thus, if I had set my heart upon him and his Kingdom. Oh that I had chosen him, and made him my portion, and spent these thoughts, and cares, and labours, for the obtaining of his love, and promised Glory, which I spent for the pleasing and providing for my self. Then I should have had a happiness that death could not deprive

me of, and a Crown that fadeth not away. Neither life nor death, nor any creature could have separated me from his love. I need not then have gone out of the world as a prisoner out of the Gaol, to the barr and to the place of execution. My departing soul should not then need to have been afraid of falling into the hands of an un-reconciled God, and so into the hands of the Devils as his executioners, nor of passing out of the flesh to hell.

Oh poor sinners, for how short a pleasure do you sell your hopes of everlasting Blessedness, and run your selves into endless pains ! O what comparison is there between the time of your pleasure, and the everlastingness of your Punishment ! How short a while is the cup at your mouthes ? or the drink in your bellies ? or the harlot in your embracements ? or the wealth of the world in your Possession ? And how long a time must you pay for this in hell ? How quickly are your merry hours past ! but your torments will never be past. When your corpes are laid in the grave, men can say, [*Now he bath done his satisfying the flesh and following the world*] but never man can truly say, [*Now he bath done suffering for it.*] Your life of sin is passing as a dream, and your honours as a shadow, and all your business as a tale that is told : but the life of Glory which you rejected for this, would have endured for evermore. Suppose as many thousand years as there are sands on the Sea, or piles of grases on the whole earth, or hairs on the heads of all men in the world, yet when these many are past, the Joy of Saints and the Torments of the wicked are as far from an end as ever they were : The eternal God doth give them a duration, and make them eternal.

When our joyes are at the sweetest, this thought must needs be part of that sweetness, that their sweetness shall never have an end. If our short fore-taste be Joy unspeakable and full of glory, what shall we call that Joy which flows from the most perfect fruition and perpetuation ? 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8. We have Joy here, but alas how seldom in comparison of what we may there expect ! Some Joy we have, but how oft do Melancholy or crosses, or losses in the world, or temptations, or sins, or despairs interrupt it ! Our sun is here most commonly under a cloud, and too often in an Eclipse ; and we have the night as often as the day. Yea our state is usually a Winter ; Our dayes are cold and short, and our nights are long. But when the flourishing state of glory comes, we shall have no Interruptions nor Eclipses. The

path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day, Prov. 4. 18. And the perfect day is a perpetual day, that knows no interruption by the darkness of the night. For there shall be no night there, nor need of candle or Sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever, Rev. 22. 5. This is the life that fears no death; and this is the feast that fears no want or future famine; the pleasure that knows nor fears no pain; the health that knows nor fears no sickness; this is the treasure that fears no moth, or rust, or thief; the building that fears no storm nor decay; the Kingdom that fears no changes by Rebellion; the friendship that fears no falling out; the Love that fears no hatred or frustration; the Glory that fears no envious eye; the possessed Inheritance that fears no ejection by fraud, or force, or any failings; the Joy that feels or fears no sorrow; while God who is *Life it self* is our life; and while God who is *Love*, is the fountain and object of our *Love*, we can never want either *Life* or *Love*: And whiles he feeds our *Love*, our *Joyful praises* will never be run dry, nor ever go out for want of fewel. This is the true *perpetual motion*, the circulation of the holy blood and spirit from God to man, and from man to God. Being prepared and brought near him, we have the blessed *Vision of his face*, by seeing him; and by the blessed emanation of his *love*, we are drawn out perpetually and unweariedly to *Love* him and *Rejoice* in him; and from hence *unceasantly* to *praise* and *honour* him. In all which, as his blessed *Image* and the shining *reflections* of his *revealed glory*, he taketh *complacency*, which is the *highest end* of *God and man*, and the *very term* of all his works and *wayes*.

I Thought here to have ended this First Part of my Discourse; but yet compassion calls me back: I fear lest with the most I have not yet prevailed; and lest I shall leave them behind me in the bonds of their iniquity. I daily hear the voice of men possessed by a spirit of uncleanness, speaking against this *Necessity* of a holy life, which Christ himself so peremptorily asserteth. I hear that voice which foretelleth a more dreadful voice, if in time they be not prevailed with to prevent it. One saith, *What need all this ado?* This strictness is more ado than needs. Another saith, *You would make men mad, by poring so much on matters that are*

above them. Another saith, *Cannot you keep your Religion to your selfe ; and be Godly with moderation, as your neighbours do ?* Another saith, *I hope God is more merciful then to damn all* which *not so precise.* Another saith, *I shall never endure so strait a life, and therefore I will venture as well as others.* The summe of all is, They are so far in love with the world and sin, and so much against a holy life, that they will not be perswaded to it, and therefore to quiet their consciences in their misery, they make themselves believe that they may be saved without it, and that it is a thing of no *Necessity*, but their coming to Church and living like good neighbours may serve the turn without it, for their salvation. And thus doth the malicious Serpent, in the hearts of those that he possesteth, rise up against the words of Christ. Christ saith that this is *The One thing needful* : And the Serpent saith, *It is mere ado then needs : and what needs all this ado ?* Though I have fully answered this *ungodly objection* already in my *Treatise of Conversion*, sect. 36. pag. 284. &c. and more fully in my *Treatise of Rest*, Part 3. Chap. 6. yet I shall once more fall upon it. For death is coming, while poor deluded souls are loytering : and if Satan by such lenseless reasonings as these, can keep them unready in their sin, till the fatal stroak hath cut them down, and cast them into endless easelss fire ; alas, how great will be their fall ? and how unspeakably dreadful will be their misery ? Whoever thou be, whether high or low, learned or unlearned, that hast disliked, opposed or reproached *serious godly Christians*, as *Puritanes*, and *too precise* ; and that thinkest the *most diligent labour for salvation* to be but *more ado then needs*, and hast not thy self yet resolutely set upon a holy life, I require at thy hands so much impartiality and faithfulness to thy own immortal soul, as seriously to peruse these following *Questions*, and to go no further in thy careles, negligent, ungodly course, till thou art able to give such a rational answer to them, as thou darest stand to now at the Barr of thine own Conscience, and hereafter at the Barr of Christ.

Quest. 1. *Canst thou possibly give God more then is his due ? Or love him more then he deserveth ? Or serve him more faithfully then thou art bound, and he is worthy of ? Art thou not his creature ? made of nothing ? and hast thou not all that thou art and hast from him ? and if thou give him all, dost thou give him any more then what is his own ? If thou give him all the affections of thy*

soul, and all the most serious thoughts of thy heart, and every hour of thy time, and every word of thy mouth, and every penny of thy wealth (in the way that he requireth it) is it any more then is his due ? Should not he have all that is Lord of all ?

Quest. 2. Is it not the first and great Commandment, [*Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and might*] And do not heathens confess this by the light of nature : And hath not thy tongue confess it many a time ? And doth not thy conscience yet bear witness that it is thy duty ? And is it possible thou shouldst thus Love him, with all thy heart, and soul, and might, and yet not seek and serve him with all thy heart, and soul, and might ? Or can the most sanctified person do any more, if he were perfect ?

Quest. 3. Dost thou not confess that we are all sinners ? And that the best is still too bad ? And that be that loveth and serveth God most, doth yet come exceeding short of his duty ? And yet wouldst thou have such men come shorter ? and darest thou persuade them to do less ? Must not the best confess their daily failings, and beg pardon of them from the Lord, and be beholden to the blood of Christ, and lament their imperfections ? And yet wouldst thou have them be such odious hypocrites, as to think they serve God too much already, while they confess that they come so short ? Shall they confess their failings, and reproach those that endeavour to avoid the like ? Shall the same tongue say, [*Lord be merciful to me a sinner*] and [*Lord, I am good enough already : What need there so much ado to please and serve thee any better ?*] What would you think of such a man ?

Quest. 4. Is it not an unquestionable duty to grow in grace ? and to press towards perfection as men that have not yet attained it ? 2 Per. 3. 18. Phil. 3. 12, 13, 14. And must Paul, and Peter, and the holiest on earth, still seek to grow and labour to be more holy ? and shall such a one as thou say, *What need I be any more holy ? that art utterly unsanctified.*

Quest. 5. Is it not one of the two grand Principles of faith and all Religion, *without which no man can please God*, Heb. 11. 6. *Whoever cometh to God must believe, first, that God is (that there is a God, most powerful, wise and good) secondly, that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him* ? yea this is one of

natures principles. It is the *Diligent seekers of God* that ~~hemi~~ reward. And yet dare a fleshly negligent sinner, reproach the diligent seeking of God; and take it for a needless thing, and say, *What needs all this ado?* Are not these the *Atheists* seconds; even next to them that *deny* that there is any God, or that *blaspheme* him? And indeed, if he be not worthy of all the Love and service that thou canst give him, he is not the true God! Consider therefore the tendency of thy words, and tremble.

Quest. 6. *Doth not that wretch set up the flesh and the world above the Lord, that thinks not most of his thoughts, and cares, and words, and time, and labour for the world to be too much ado, and yet thinks less for God and heaven to be too much?* And dost thou think in thy conscience that the flesh is better worthy of thy Love, and care, and labour, then the Lord? or that earth will prove a better reward to thee then Heaven? Who, thinkest thou, will have the better bargain in the end? The fool that *laid up riches for himself, and was not rich to God*, and shall lose all at once that he so much valued, and so carefully sought, (Luke 12. 20, 21.) or he that *laid up his treasure in Heaven*, and there set his heart, and sought for the never fading Crown? *Matth. 6. 20, 21, 33.* and counted all as loss and dung for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ, *Phil. 3. 8.* Do you think that there is any thing more worth your care, and time, and labour, or can you more profitably lay it out?

Quest. 7. *Have you not immortal souls to save or lose?* And are not your bodies for their service? and to be used and ruled by them? And should not your souls then have more of your care and diligence, then corruptible flesh that must turn to dirt?

Quest. 8. *Dare any one of you say that you are wiser then the All-knowing God?* Is not thy wisdom less to his, then a glow-worms light is to the Sun? And hath not God most plainly and frequently in his Word commanded thee a holy life? Yea every part and parcell of it, is nothing else but the obeying of that Word: For if it be not prescribed by the Lord, it is not Holiness, nor that which I am pleading for. And when the living God hath told the world his mind and will, shall a sinful man stand up and say, *I am wiser then my Maker?* *I know a better way then this?* *What need then all this stir for Heaven?* What dost thou less then thus blaspheme, and set up thy folly above the wisdom of the Lord when

when thou condemnest or reproachest the holiness which he commandeth?

Quest. 9. Dare you say that God is not only so unwise, but so unrighteous and tyranical, as to give the world unnecessary Laws, and set them upon a needless work? What King so tyranical as would require his subjects on pain of death to go pick straws against the wind? What Master or Parent so foolishly cruel as to command their servants or children, to weary themselves with hunting butter-flies, and following their own shadows? And darest thou impute such foolish tyrrannie to the God of heaven? as if he had made a world, and set them upon a needless work? and commanded them to tire themselves in vain?

Quest. 10. Can a man be too diligent about that work which he was made for, and is daily preserved and maintained for, and for which he hath all the mercies of his life? Thou hadst never come into the world but on this business, even to serve and please God, and prepare for everlasting happiness: And are you afraid of doing this too diligently? Why is it, thinkest thou, that God sustaineth thee? Why dyedst thou not many years ago? but only that thou mightest have time to seek and serve him. Was it only that thou mightest eat, and drink, and sleep, and go up and down, and fill up a room among the living? Why beasts, and fools, and mad-men do all this, as well as thou. Why hast thou thy ~~Reason~~ and understanding, but to know and serve the Lord? Is it only to know how to shift a little for the commodities of the world? Or is it not to know the way to life eternal? Look round about thee on all the creatures, and on all the mercies which thou dost possess; every deliverance, and priviledge, and accommodation; every bit of bread thou eatest, and every hour of thy precious time, are all given thee for this *One thing needful*: And yet wile thou say that this *One thing is needless*, for which thou hast all things? Thou mayest then say, that God made the world in vain; and preserveth and governeth it in vain. For all this is but for his service, which thou callest *vain*.

Quest. 11. Dost not Reason tell thee, that the place in which thou must live for ever, should be more diligently minded (and prepared for) than this in which thou must consist but for a while? Alas, it is so short a time that we must be here, that it makes all the matters of this world (as such) to be inconsiderable things; as dreams and shadows. What great matter is it for so short a time,

whether we be rich or poor, well or sick, in credit or in contempt ! whether we laugh or weep ! When our part will be so quickly acted, and we must go naked out of the world as we came into it. For *so short a time*, a poor habitation may serve the turn, as well as the most splendid Palace : A painful, obscure, afflicted life, may do as well as the most plentiful provisions, and the greatest ease and worldly honours. The purple and fine linnen, the silks and bravery will be soon forgotten ; and the soul in Hell will be no more the better for them, than the rotten carcass in the grave. The taste of the delicious meats and drinks will quickly be forgotten : and sportful youth will be turned into cold and languid age : and the most confirmed health into dolorous sickness ; and mirth and laughter into mournful groans. And is such a *transitory life* as this, more worthy of your care and greatest diligence, than life eternal ? O one would think that the world that you must be ever, ever in, should never, never be forgotten ! There is the company that you must live with for ever : There is the state that you shall never change : There is the Joy or Torment that shall have no end ; and while you forget it, you are posting to it, and are almost there. And can you be too careful for eternity ?

Quest. 12. Consider also but the infinite Joys of Heaven, and tell me, Whether thou dost think, they are not worthy the greatest joys or pains that thou canst be at to get them ? Dost thou think that Heaven is not worthy of the labour ; that is bestowed for it by the holiest Saints on earth ? Will it not require them to the full ? Will any that comes thither repent that they obtained it at so dear a rate ? If now thou couldst speak with one of those Believers, mentioned in Heb. 11. that lived as strangers and pilgrims on earth, as seeking a better, even a heavenly Country, that preferred the reproach of Christ before the treasure of the world, and chose affliction with the people of God, before the pleasures of sin for a season, that were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might receive a better resurrection ; that had tryal of cruel mockings and scourgings, and of bonds and imprisonments, and were stoned, sawn asunder, stemped, slain with the sword, wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented, though men of whom the world was not worthy : Would any one of these now tell you, that they did or suffered too much for Heaven ? Or that it was not worth ten thousand times more ? If

thy tongue dare say that Heaven is not worth the cost or trouble of a holy life, (or if thy life say so, though thy tongue dare not,) thou judgest thy self unworthy of it, and sentencest thy self unto damnation.

Quest. 13. And are the torments of Hell so small and tolerable, that thou thinkest a holy life too dear a means for to prevent them? Dost thou believe the threatenings of the Lord, that he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power? 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. and yet canst thou say, What needs all this ado, to escape such endless misery! Thou wilt take any medicine to cure but the gout or stone, if once thou have felt them? Thou wilt draw out a tooth to prevent the pain of it. And is Holiness so hateful or grievous a thing to thee, that thou wilt venture on Hell it self to avoid it? If so much of Hell be in thy heart already, blame none but thy self if thou have thy choice.

Quest. 14. Why wast thou baptized into the Covenant of Holiness, to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, if thou think it needless to perform thy Covenant? A holy life is no more then on Baptism thou wast solemnly engaged too: There didst thou renounce the flesh, the world and the Devil; and tookst God for thy portion and absolute Lord, and gavest up thy self to be ruled by him, and saved by Christ, and sanctified by the holy Spirit; and dost thou now say, What needs all this ado? Are we all by our Baptismal Vow engaged to a needless thing? I tell thee, there is not the holiest man on earth, that doth any more then what he is bound to by the Covenant-Relations which he undertook in Baptism.

Quest. 15. Moreover, What an Hypocrite art thou to profess thy self a member of the Holy Catholick Church, if Holiness which is the life of the Church, seem needless to thee? Why dost thou profess to believe and desire the Communion of Saints, if the life of Saints seem needless to thee, and thou wilt not have Communion with them in their sanctity? Dost thou not plainly renounce thy Covenant, and faith, and duty, when thou renouncest a holy life as a thing unnecessary?

Quest. 16. Dost thou think, or darest thou say, that the bloody death, and holy life of Jesus Christ were more then needs in order to thy

by salvation? Unless thou be a professed Infidel, I know thou darest not say so: And if thy soul were worth the sufferings of the Lord of Life, is it not worth all the cost and labour of thy day? Christ lived a life of perfect holiness: he never sinned: he fulfilled all righteousness: he prayed all night, and with greatest fervency: preaching and doing good was his employment. Though he hated Pharisaical superstition, and the teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and serving God according to mens traditions, yet was there never so holy, and pure, and precise, and strict, and heavenly a life as Jesus Christ's: And this was for our redemption, and our example. And darest thou say that this was needless? Should we not endeavour to imitate our pattern? Are they better that are likest Christ, or they that are most unlike him? And which dost thou think is liker Christ, the body or the substance? Sure we that fall so short of the example that Christ hath given us, are far from being more diligent then needs, when Christ went not too far, nor was too strict, that went so very far beyond us.

Quest. 17. Look upon all the institutions of the Lord: On Magistracy, and Ministry, and the great Works of their office: On prayer, and preaching, and Sacraments, and Discipline, and all other Ordinances of God; and also on all the frame of the holy Scripture; and also on all the workings and graces of the Holy Ghost; and tell me whether thou darest say, that all or any of these are in vain? and whether that Holiness which all these are appointed for, can be a vain and needless thing?

Quest. 18. Darest thou say that Christ doth more then needs, in his Intercession for us with the Father now in Heaven? It is he that sendeth the spirit to sanctifie us: It is he that prayeth that we may be sanctified by the truth? We have no grace and holiness but what we have from him. And darest thou say he doth too much? It is he that sends his Ministers to call men to a holy life: Look into his Word, and see whether the doctrine which they preach be not there prescribed to them; and the duties of holiness there commended. If therefore it were erroneous or excessive, it would be long of Christ, and not of his Messengers or Disciples, that speak and do no more for holiness, then he bids them; but fall exceeding short.

Quest. 19. Art thou wiser in this, and more to be believed, then all the ancient Prophets, and Apostles, and servants of God in former ages?

eyes, and then all that are now alive on earth, that ever tryed a holy life ? The Scripture will tell thee that *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David*, and all the rest of the Saints that were then most dear to God, were so far from thinking that a holy life was more then needs, that they thought they could never be *holy enough*, and blamed their defects when they excelled such as now thou blamest as too precise. And if thou wilt preferr the words and example of a worldling, or of a foppish sensual man, before the judgement and example of these Saints, the company that thou choocest, and the deceivers whom thou followest, shall be also thy companions in calamity, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see the Saints from East and West, from North and South, sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob*, and all the Prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and you, and such as you thrust out : Even when the last in time (whom you here despised) shall be equal to the first and ancient *Saints*, *Luke 13. 27, 28, 29, 30*. Why do you hypocritically honour the names and memorials of the Prophets, Apostles, and other former Saints, and keep *Holy-days* for them, and yet reproach their holy course, and preferr the judgement of a drunkard or a malignant enemy of godliness before theirs ? For so you do when you argue against a holy life.

Quest. 20. *Doth thou think that there is now one soul in Heaven or Hell, that is of thy prophane opinion, and would say, that a diligent holy life is more aduertis for mens salvation ?* Certainly, those in *Heaven* have more knowledge, and experience, and love to God and man, and goodness, then to be of so impious a mind, or once to entertain such beastly thoughts : And those in *Hell*, though still *alive*, have learned to their cost to know the great *Necessity of goodness* : And would tell you, if they could speak with you, that the most strict and heavenly life for millions of ages were not too dear, for the escaping of the everlasting misery. Why else do we find one of them in *Luke 16*, described as so desirous, that one of the dead might be sent to his Brethren, to warn them that they come not to that place of torment ? And, what is it that he would have had them warned of, but that they should live a holy self-denying life, and with all their diligence lay up a treasure in the life to come, instead of living so sensual, and voluptuous, and ungodly a life as he had lived. The scope of the story tells us that this would have been his message, if he might have sent.

Quest. 21. Dost thou think in thy Conscience that at the hour of thy death, or at least at Judgement, thou shalt think thy self the Holiness was unnecessary? Doth not thy heart tell thee that then thou shalt be of another mind? and wish with the deepest desires of thy soul, that thou hadst lived as strictly, and prepared for everlasting life as seriously, and served God as diligently, as ever did any Saint on earth? But alas, those wishes will be then too late. Now is thy day: and now thou takest thy work to be needless: And to see the Necessity when time is gone, will be thy torment, but not thy remedy. Not one in this Congregation, or Town, or Countrey, not one in England, or in all the world, but shall be forced at last, whether he will or no, to justify the wisdom of the godly, and the worst of you shall then witness ten thousand fruitless groans desire, that you had imitated the holiest persons that you knew. Not a tongue then shall say, Who needs all this ado for heaven? Not a man there dare call his neighbour Puritan, nor take up a contemptuous jar, against the diligent servants of the Lord.

Quest. 22. Is not that man at the heart against the Lord, that reproacheth his serious diligent servants, and counteth his work unprofitable? Men are more willing to please those that they love, and more ready to do the works they love. If your son or servant speak against your service, but as you do against Gods, what would you think of their affections? Doubtless it is no better than a secret hatred to the holiness of God, and a *Serpentines enmity* to his holy wayes, that causeth all these senseless cavils, and impious speeches, against the life that he hath commanded us to live.

Quest. 23. Is it not most unreasonable impiety, for that man to speak against too strict exact obedience, and against serving God much, that hath served the world, the flesh, and the Devil in vigour and flower of his dayes, and this with pleasure, and then said, It is too much? When thou wast drinking and sporting thou wast not weary: When it comes to a meager of riches, or honour, or ease, or pleasure, to gratifie thy worldliness, pride, laziness and voluptuousness, then thou never saist, It is too much? And is all too little for sin and the Devil, and all too much for thy soul and God? Let Conscience tell thee whether this be just.

Quest. 24. Is it not a foolish wickedness, for that man to cry out against

against making haste to heaven, and going so fast in the ways of God that hath loytered already till the evening of his dayes, and lost so much time as thou hast done ? If thou hadst begun as soon as thou hadst the use of reason, and remembred thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, and never lost an hour of thy time since then till now, thou hadst done no more then what thy God, thy soul, and all right reason required of thee ! For surely he that made thee, hath in wisdom proportioned thy time to thy work, and hath not given thee an hour too much. A long life is short enough to prepare for everlasting. And shall a loytering Rebell that hath wasted so much of his little time, cry out, *What needs so much ado ?*

Quest. 25. *Is it not the graceless miserable sort of men, that cry out, What needs all this ado ?* Certainly it is : For Scripture, and Reason, and Experience tell us, that all that are godly, are of another mind : The more grace they have, the more they would have : The more they love God, the more they would love him. The more good they do, the more they would do. Do you not see how they labour after more grace ? and hear how they complain that they are no better ? O how it would glad them to be more Holy and more Heavenly ! It is therefore the *strangers* and *despisers* of grace, that never knew by experience, the nature, and power, and sweetnes of it, that say, *It is more ado then needs.* And is it not a most unreasonable thing for a man that hath *no saving grace and holiness* at all, to cry out against *excess* of holiness ? And for a man that is in the *captivity* of the Devil, and ready suddenly to drop into *Hell*, if death do but strike the fatal blow, before he be regenerate, to talk against *doing too much for heaven* ? And for a man that never did God one hours pleasing service, (Heb. 11. 6.) to prate against *serving God too much* ? O poor wretch ! were thy eyes but opened, thou wouldest see that of any man in the Town or Countrey, this language ill becometh thee. When God hath been so long offended, and thy soul is almost lost already, and death and hell is hard at hand, and may swallow thee up in endless desperation for ought thou knowest, before thou hast read this Book to the end, or before thou see another year, or moneth, or day, is it time for such a one as thee to say, *What needs so much ado ?* One would think if there be any *life* in thee, thou shouldest stir as for thy life : and if thou have a voice to cry, thou shouldest cry out to God both day and night.

would do all that he could to keep men from a holy life. And darest thou thus openly p'ay his part ?

Quest. 28. Canst thou think (when eternal life is at the stake) that a man so weak in the midst of so many hindrances and enemies, hath cause to count his diligence unnecessary ? When Satan like a roaring Lyon, is seeking day and night to devour thee (1 Pe. 5. 8.) when his malice, subtlety, and diligence is so great, and so unwearyed ; when his instruments are so many, so subtle, and so powerful ; when the world aboundeth round about thee with such dangerous enticing snares and baits ; when thy trayterous flesh so near thee is thy most perilous enemy, unceasantly drawing thee from God unto the creature ; and when thou art so impotent to resist all these assaults ; art thou then in a condition fit to cry out against the greatest diligence for thy soul ? Should a man going up the steepest hill, when it is for his life, be afraid of going too fast ? When thou hast done all thou canst, it is well for thee that ever thou wast born if it suffice. If weaknesses and enemies cause such a difficulty that the righteous themselves are scarcely saved (that is, with much ado) is it then time for thee to ask What needs so much ado ?

Quest. 29. Dost thou not deal exceeding unthankfully and ungraciously with God ? When he thinks not the Sun and Moon and all the creatures too good to serve thee, nor all his mercies too great for thee ; no not the blood of his beloved Son, nor his Spirit, nor Heaven itself if thou wilt accept them in his way ; wilt thou think thy best in good for him ? and thy most diligent service to be too much ? When thy All is next to Nothing ; and thy Best doth not profit the Almighty, but thy self, and the gain will be thy own. If a man should think it too much to put off his hat and thank thee, when thou hast given him a thousand pound, or to go a mile for thee, when thou hast saved his life ; thou wouldest say he were not a man, but a monster of ingratitude. But thy unthankfulness is ten thousand-fold worse to God, who would deliver thee from everlasting torments, and give thee everlasting glory, and save thee from Satan and all thy sins, if thou wilt but take his safe remedie, and thou churlishly refusest, as if all were not worth so much ado.

Quest. 30. Dost thou know what a life it is that thou accountest an unnecessary toil ? It is a life of the greatest Safety, Commodity, Honour, and Delight, (besides the justice and honesty of it) of all

in the world ; and indeed thou canst not choose any other but at thy peril, and to thy greatest loss and ruine, and to thy present and everlasting shame and sorrow : It is the sweetest and most pleasant life on earth, that thou ignorantly accountest such a tedious toyl. The manifestation of this shall be my work in the second Part of this Discourse.

And now I dare affirm, that when the dreadful God shall shortly judge thee who hast read or heard these words, it will be found indelibly written upon thy Conscience, that thou hadst here such Reasons laid before thee, to prove the *Necessity of a serious, diligent, holy life*, as all the wit in earth or Hell, is not able solidly to confute ; and that an ungodly sensual life is most unreasonable ; and that, if after this, thou continue in an unsanctified fleshly state, thou shall justly perish as one that wilfully refused salvation, as in despight of God, his mercies and his messengers, and of the plainest undeniable Truth and Reason : And that in refusing to be a *S A I N T*, thou madest thy self in the greatest matters no better then a *B R U T E*, wilfully subjecting thy *Reason* to thy sensuality, and judging thy self unmeet for everlasting Happiness.

But here I know the self-deceiving Hypocrite will object, *That all this that I am proving so diligently is confess, and nothing to the point in question : Which is not, Whether One thing be needful, and Holiness be of Necessity to salvation ? For who denye this ? But the question is, Whether it be this Puritanical precise way of serving God which only deserves the name of Holiness ? and whether they be not as truly godly and sanctified that say their prayers morning and night, and go to Church on Sundays, and follow their busynesses the rest of the week, without any more ado ?*

Answ. Either it is the substance of holy duties, or but the circumstances, which you quarrel at as Puritanical and precise. If it be only the circumstances, (as Whether we should receive the Lords Supper standing, or kneeling, or sitting ? Whether we should pray publickly without Book, or on the Book ? and Whether a Scripture-form or another be better ? and Whether a continued speech, or ver-sicles, an-hems, and oft-repeated words and sentences be better ? What form of Church Government is best ? by Direction

in the fervour of thy soul, even now while mercy may be left time should over-slip thee, and thou be shut up in the place of torment: If Hell-fire will not make thee stir, What will? Should a weak Christian that is cast behind hand by his negligence, but once speak against a diligent life, he were exceeding too blame. But for thee that art yet in the gall of bitterness, in the misery of an unregenerate state, to speak against holy diligence for salvation, when thou art in such great and deep distress, and like a man that is drowning, or a house on fire, that may presently have help or perish; this is a madness that hath no name sufficient to express it by; which its a wonder that a rational soul should be guilty of.

Quest. 26. Art thou not afraid of some sudden vengeance from the Lord, for thou making thy self his open enemy, and contradicting him to his face? Mark his language, and then mark thine. Christ saith, [Enter in at the strait gate: For wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.] Matth. 7. 13, 14. [Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.] Luke 13. 24. [See then that ye walk circumspectly (or exactly) not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.] Ephes. 5. 15, 16. [For I say unto you, that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven.] Matth. 5. 20. [Wherefore brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.] 2 Pet. 1. 10. [Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.] Phil. 2. 12. [Seeing then all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God.] 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12. [And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear.] 1 Pet. 4. 18. [Lay not up for your selves a treasure on earth, &c. but lay up for yourselves a treasure in heaven, &c. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.] Matth. 6. 19, 20, 21. [Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness.] Matth. 6. 33. [Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life.] John 6. 27. [The Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.] Matth. 11. 12. [Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth

verth the prize ? So run that ye may obtain : And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things : Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown ; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly : so fight I, not as one that beateth the air : but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection ; lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I my self should be a cast-away.] 1 Cor. 9. 24, 25, 26, 27. [Wherfore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? Hearken diligently unto me, eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness ; encline your ear, and come unto me ; hear and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you.] Isa. 55. 1, 2, 3. [Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.] Rom. 12. 11. [For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men ; teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world : Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and sanctifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.] Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. [Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully.] Jer. 48. 10. [Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might : For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whether thou goest.] Eccles. 9. 10.

These and such like are the sayings of God, by which thou mayst easily understand his mind concerning the necessity of a serious, diligent, holy life. And shall a blind and wretched worm come after, and dare to contradict him, and unsay all this, and say, *What needs so much ado ? What ! darest thou thus openly resist God to his face ? What art thou ? and what is thy word, that we should regard it before the Word of God ?*

Quest. 27. *Dost thou not know that by thy speaking against a diligent holy life, thou gratifiest the Devil, and openly servest him, and saist the very things that he would have thee say ? What can more please him, and advance his Kingdom, and suit his malicious ends, than to stop and cool men in the service of the Lord, and make them believe that holiness is but a needless thing ? If the Devil might have leave to walk visibly among men, and speak to them in their language, he would speak to them as thou dost, and say the same things which he putteth into thy mouth ; and*

would do all that he could to keep men from a holy life. And darest thou thus openly p'ay his part ?

Quest. 28. Canst thou think (When eternal life is at the stake) that a man so weak in the midst of so many hindrances and enemies, bath cause to count his diligence unnecessary ? When Satan like a roaring Lyon, is seeking day and night to devour thee (1 Th. 5. 8.) when his malice, subtilty, and diligence is so great, and so unweareid ; when his instruments are so many, so subtile, and so powerful ; when the world aboundeth round about thee with such dangerous enticing snares and baits ; when thy trayterous flesh so near thee is thy most perilous enemy, unceasantly drawing thee from God unto the creature ; and when thou art so impotent to resist all these assaults ; art thou then in a condition fit to cry out against the greatest diligence for thy soul ? Should a man going up the steepest hill, when it is for his life, be afraid of going too fast ? When thou hast done all thou canst, it is well for thee that ever thou wast born if it suffice. If weaknesses and enemies cause such a difficulty that the righteous themselves are scarcely saved (that is, with much ado) is it then time for thee to ask What needs so much ado ?

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Ausw. Either it is the *substance* of *holy duties*, or but the *circumstances*, which you quarrel at as Puritanical and precise. If it be only the *circumstances*, (as Whether we should receive the Lords Supper standing, or kneeling, or sitting ? Whether we should pray publicly without Book, or on the Book ? and Whether a Scripture-form or another be better ? and Whether a *continuall* speech, or *versicles*, *answering*, and *answering* repeated words and sentences be better ? What form of Church-Government is best ? by Discourse

Bishops, or by all the Pastors ? and the like) It is not of such things as these that I am pleading with thee : Though some of them are matters of considerable moment, for the helping or hindring men in godliness; yet it is greater matters then these, that I am now contending for. Agree with us practically in the substance, in *Faith, Repentance, Love, Obedience, Mortification, Heavenliness, Humility, Patience, and serious diligence and zeal* in all, and then I am none of those that will condemn or censure you; but one that will rejoice in you, as those that I hope to rejoice with for ever.

But if it be the substantial duties of godliness that you resist, while you own but the *Name of godliness in the general*, I must tell you that it is not *Names and Generals* that will save you; nor prove that you have your selves one spark of Grace. Nothing more easie and common then for the most ungodly to say, they are *all for a godly life*; and *God forbid that any should be against it*; when yet they hate and reject it indeed, when it comes to the practice of those particular duties in which it doth consist. It is not *godliness* that they hate and reproach, but it is *servent pray, holy conference, meditation, self-denial, mortification of the desire of the flesh, heavenly mindedness, &c.* In *general*, they will say that *Gods Law must be obeyed, and his Will preferred before their own*: But when it comes to the *particulars*, they *Love him not above all*, they take his name in vain, they keep not *holy his day*, they disobey superiors that would reform them, they are envious, malicious, covetous, lustful, and break all the Commandments in *particular*, which in *general* they profess to keep. As if your servant should promise to do your work; and when you set him to it, one thing is too hard, and another he is not used to, and so he hath his exceptions against the greatest part which he undertook. As if one should wound one of you in the head, and stab yours the heart, and cut off an arm or a leg, and say, *I wish the man no harm*; *It is not the man that I hate or hurt*, but only the head, the heart, the arm, &c. Even so, it is not *holiness* that these men hate, and speak against; but it is *so much praying, and meditating, and reading the Scriptures, and making such a stir about Religion, when less ado may serve the turn*.

But wretched soul, if thou have not the wit to see the contradictions of thy deceitful tongue, and the venome of thy malignant heart, dost thou think that such foolish shifts as these

will blind the eyes of heavenly Justice ; and save thee from the vengeance of a Holy God , which he hath denonnced against rebellious hypocrites ? But come on ; let us try whether the several parts of godliness which thou questionest , or callest Puritanism or preciseness , are not most expressly and peremptorily commanded in the Word of God .

1. Is it so much preaching and hearing Sermons that thou quarrellest with ? Hear then how Christ and his Apostles preached , and how they required men to hear . Mark 1. 35, 37, 38, 39. [And in the morning rising up a great while before day , he went out and departed into a solitary place , and there prayed : And Simon and they that were with him followed after him ; and when they had found him they said unto him , All men seek for thee : And he said , Let us go unto the next Towns , that I may preach there also ; for therefore came I forth : and he preached in their Synagogues throughout all Galilee .] Mark 2. 2. [And straight-way many were gathered together , insomuch that there was no room to receive them ; no not so much as about the door , and he preached the Word unto them .] Mark 3. 19, 20, 21. [And they went into an house , and the multitude cometh together again , so that they could not so much as eat bread : and when his friends heard of it , they went out to lay hold on him ; for they said , He is beside himself .] Acts 3. 42. [And daily in the Temple , and in every house , they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ .] Acts 4. 4. [They that were scattered went everywhere preaching the Word .] Acts 20. 20, 28, 31. [I kept back nothing that was profitable to you , but have shewed you , and have taught you publickly and from house to house — Take heed therefore to your selves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Over-seers , to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood — Therefore Watch , and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears .] Rom. 10. 14, 15. [How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard ? and how shall they hear without a Preacher ?] Phil. 1. 18. [Every way whether in presence or in truth Christ is preached , and I do therein rejoice , yea and will rejoice .] 1 Cor. 1. 21. [It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe .] Col. 1. 28, 29. [Where we preach , warning every man , and teaching every man , in all wisdom , that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus , &c .] 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. [I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus .]

Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom, preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.] 1 Cor. 9. 16. [Necessity is laid upon me; yea woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel.]

What say you now? do we not fall much short of those that we should imitate, rather then do too much in preaching? But what need we more then the text it self, where for hearing, Mary is so commanded, and her sister blamed for neglecting it, though it was to make provision for Christ himself and those that were with him? Acts 20. 7. [And upon the first day of the week when the Disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, being to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight.] Jam. 1. 19. [Let every one be swift to hear.] Rev. 2. 7. &c. [He that hath ear, let him hear.] Luke 8. 21. [Jesus said, My mother and my brethren are those which hear the Word of God and do it.] I hope you see this duty is past question.

3. Is it the reading of the Scripture that is the Puritanism or too much ado that you blame? Or is it the frequent meditating on such high and holy things? Hear what the Spirit saith of this: Psalm 1. 1, 2. [Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night—The ungodly are not so—] Psalm 119. 97. [O how I love thy Law! it is my meditation all the day.] 99. [Thy testimonies are my meditation.] v. 148. [Mine eyes prevented the night watches, that I might meditate on thy Word.] Job 23. 12. [I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.] Psalm 119. 72. [The Law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.] Mark 12. 10. [Have ye not read the Scriptures?] John 5. 39. [Search the Scriptures.] Acts 8. 28. [The Eunuch sitting in his Chariot read Elias the Prophet.] 1 Tim. 4. 13. [Give audience to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.] I hope you see also that this part of godliness is past question.

3. Is it much and fervent prayer that is the preciseness or too much ado that you make question of? Hear then what the Holy Ghost doth say of that: Phil. 4. 6. [In every thing by Prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known]

to God.] 1 Thes. 5. 17, 18. [Pray without ceasing: In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God concerning you] Luke 18. 1. [And he spake a parable to them to this end, that men ought alwayes to pray, and not to wax faint, &c.] Luke 11. 8, 9. [I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth: And I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.] Luke 6. 12. [He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.] Daniel would not give over praying three times a day in his house, for thirty dayes space, at the Kings command, no not to save his life from devouring Lions. David saith, Psalm 119. 164. [Seven times a day do I praise thee.] Lam. 2. 19. [Arise: cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord:] Psalm 14. 4. it is part of the wicked Atheists description, that [They call not upon the Lord.] Jer. 10. 25. [Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and the families that call not on thy name.] Psalm 145. 18. [The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him; to all that call upon him in truth.] When Paul was converted, the Lord lets Ananias know it by this token, Acts 9. 11. [For behold he prayeth.] Acts 1. 14. [These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.] Acts 2. 42. The three thousand Converts [continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.] Col 4. 2 [Continue in prayer, and watch in the same, with thanksgiving; withall praying also for us, that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mysterie of Christ.] Rom. 12. 12. [Continuing instant in prayer.] Jam. 5. 16. [The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.] 1 Tim. 4. 5. [For (every creature) is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.] 1 Tim. 5. 5. [She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.] Jude 20. [Praying in the Holy Ghost.] 2 Thes. 3. 10. [Night and day praying exceedingly.] Ephes. 6. 18. [Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereto with all perseverance and supplication for all Saints; and for me, &c.] 2 Chron. 6. 29. [What prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall spread forth his

his hands in this house, then bear thou from Heaven, &c.]

I hope by this time, if you have eyes you see, that more frequent and fervent prayers then any of us use (and that without Book) were used by the antient servants of the Lord, and were not thought too much ado, nor more ado then God requireth of us.

4. Is it constant, diligent teaching, instructing, and catechizing your families, and labouring that your selves and they may understand and practise the Law of God? Hear also what the Spine saith of this: and then judge whether it be too much p[re]eiseness.

Prov. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. [My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my Commandements with thee; so that thou incline thy ear unto wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding: yea if thou cryest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding: if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hidden treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.] Deut. 6. 5, 6, 7. & 11. 18, 19, 20. [And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might: And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up: And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes; and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.] Gen. 18, 19. [For I know Abraham that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.] Josh. 24. 15. [But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.] Prov. 22. 6. [Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.] Eph. 6. 4. [Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.] These and many such passages shew you that the most diligent instructing of your families, is not more ado then God requireth, but a most weighty needful part of godliness.

5. Is it the meeting of divers neighbours together (distinct from Church-meetings) that you question? Why, if it be Schismatical in opposition to the publick meetings, or to do any unlawful work, we are against it as well as you. But if it be but for the redēcting of their time, for their spiritual advantage, and more

derly, peaceably, and soberly observed, by some that have more time, or care of their souls, then the rest of their neighbours ; sure you will not for shame imagine, that neighbours may lawfully meet to make merry, and feast, and sport, and conferr about their worldly business, and yet may not meet to pray, and praise God, and repeat what instructions they have received of their Teachers, and prepare for and improve the publick Ordinances ? Hear what the Spirit saith also in this. In the *text* here you find just such a meeting, where Christ was teaching, and *Mary* and his Disciples hearing, and *Martha* cumbered with providing for the company, and blamed for neglecting the advantage for her soul. *Acts 12. 12. Peter came out of prison to the house of Mary, where many were gathered together praying.] Acts 10. 24. [Cornelius called together his kin-men and near friends] to hear Peter ; who there preached to them, converted and *baptized* them. I need to instance in no more, because this was the ordinary practice of Christ and the Apostles. If you say, *Those were times of persecution* : I answer, True : But, 1. yet such times in which publick Assemblies were ordinarily held, and publick preaching used, 2. And as the good of mens souls required it in times of persecution, so when the good of souls requires it, in times of liberty, it is from the same general reason a duty ; but *never forbidden* by Christ in any times of greatest prosperity and peace.*

6. Is it the *holy observation of the Lords day* that is the *preciseness* that you cannot away with ? Of all men, it beseems not them to quarrel at this, that own our Homilies, and with the *Common-prayer*, use after the *fourth Commandment* to say, [*Lord have mercy upon us, and encline our hearts to keep this Law* ;] When they have heard, [*Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day, thou, thy Son, thy daughter, thy man-servant, thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates.*] You see all the foresaid duties must be performed, and publick Assemblies for Gods worship and our instruction continued : And therefore there must be *some known appointed time* for these. And do you know *any other day* that is fitter ? I think you will not pretend to that : You would *not have another day* instead of this ; but you would have *no day* at all for such *holy works* ; but a day for ease, and idleness, and sports, and vain discourse, and pleasures, with *some little formal publick worship intermixt to cheat your souls*. It is not then the *Day*, but the *serious, diligent, holy employments* and

and duty that you are against ; and that I have proved to be Gods will before. Doubtless if you leave all men to serve God when they will, without any stated time, his worship will soon be brought to nothing, and they that pretend to keep every day holy, will keep none. Look upon the *places* where the *Lords day* is kept holy, and see whether godliness flourish not there incomparably above all other places. And I think none can doubt but that more souls have been converted and brought home to God on *that day*, then on any day of the week, if not then *all there* beside. And there is not the peevishest malignant soul of you, that can with any shew of reason prove that the holy observation of the *Lords day* is *unlawful*, if it were *not necessary* : So that we are at least on the *safest side of the hedge* : For we can say that we take a *most happy opportunity* for the good of our own souls, and the worshipping of God ; and that we are sure we do that which is *no sin* ; our adversaries themselves do not charge us with doing that which is *forbidden*, but that which they conceit *unnecessary* : But if we should do as they, and neglect this day, we are not sure but it may be a *great sin* ; (nay indeed we are sure it would be so.)

But what saith the Holy-Ghost now to this question ? To pass by the fourth Commandement, at this time, the letter of it, and the equity and reason of a seventh day ; the advantage of reason why there should be no less under the Gospel, and such like ; I shall only now say these two things. 1. It is *plain in Scripture* that (*de facto*) the Apostles and Churches used to meet for holy Communion in Gods worship on the *Lords day* : And consequently that this was appointed by the Apostles, or immediately by Christ himself, there being then no other that pretended to any such authority : and that Apostolical allowance no man questioneth. The Apostles then having the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, by which they were enabled infallibly to make known the will of God, and being commissioned as well as enabled hereunto ; as their writing of the holy Scriptures, so their constitutions for the ordering of the Church, being the effects of that *Authority* received from Christ, and that *Ability* given them by the Spirit, are Divine, and principally the acts of Christ and the Holy Ghost, whose agents the Apostles were. Now that the first Churches did by their appointment, observe the *Lords day* for holy actions, is apparent. As Christ first laid the ground-work by

ing on that day, so he began that very day to preach unto *Mary* the comfortable doctrine of his Ascension, in words that deserve to be written in gold, or rather in the deepest room of every true Believers heart : [John 20. 17. *Go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God*] ; The first Sermon that ever was preached on a Lords day, even on the first Lords day by Christ himself, even to a beloved penitent woman, whom he chose to be as it were his Apostle to his Apostles, to deliver them this Message as from him.

On the same day the Disciples being Assembled, he owned and blessed their Assembly, and gave them the Holy Ghost and Apostolic power.

¶ When Thomas being absent from the Assembly the first Lords day, did miss the sight of Christ and was unbelieving, Christ left him a whole week in his unbelief, and would not heal him till the next Lords day, which he honoured with that cure. Then the Disciples being met again, Christ came among them, and convinced Thomas.

On another Lords day, they were all with one accord in one place, and the Holy Ghost was in the extraordinary measure given them. And *Act 20. 7.* it is mentioned as the custom of the Disciples, to come together on the first day of the week to break bread; and *Paul then preached to them even till midnight.* And *1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.* the Collections for the Saints were made every first day of the week in all the Churches of Galatia, and at Corinth, because they had then their holy Assemblies. And therefore *Rev. 1. 10.* it is called peculiarly the Lords day.

2. But to clear this past all rational doubting, we find in all the writings of the antients, and historie of the Church, that all the Churches through the world unanimously observed the Lords day as instituted by Christ or the Holy Ghost in the Apostles; none ever questioning or contradicting it, that ever I read of. He that hath read the writings of the Antients, and deaveth this, is unworthy to be disputed with. The practice of the universal Church is a full exposition of the fore-cited Scriptures, and though it be no Law to us it self, yet is it a full discovery of the fact (telling us what was the primitive practice) and so a discovery of the Law. And shall any private ignorant man, come in after one thousand six hundred and twenty six years, and say the Apostles and all the Churches in the world have been deceived till this day,

and we must rectifie the mistake? Shall these fellows come in at the end of the world, and call the Apostles and all the Churches of all ages *Puritanes*, for keeping holy the *Lords day*? Or will any but a brain-sick person hearken to such shameless men as these?

Object. *But the antient Churches did not keep that day as a Sabbath, but only as a day for publick worship.*

Ans^w. We will not stick with you for the *name*: We urge you not to call it the Sabbath, (though the Antients sometimes did so: See our Homilies of the Place and Time of Prayer) if you will call it as *Scripture* and the Churches did, by the *name of the Lords day*. And it was then the custom of the Churches, to spend almost all the day in publick *Worship and Holy Communion*, and therefore they had but little time for any private duties that day. And yet (though the private practises of particular persons on that day be little mentioned in Church-history) no man can prove that they used to spend any remaining hours of that day in common time in common business. So that to quarrel against the *holy observation of the Lords day*, is but to quarrel with the *Holy Ghost and the Apostles*, and all the *Churches of all ages* since, and with the *happiest season for the worshipping of God*, and seeking our own and other mens edification.

7. What is there yet remaining then that you quarrel with as too much preciseness? Is it the strictness of mens lives in forbearing sin, and not doing as their neighbours do, in rioting and vain recreations, and delights? For this I need not stand to justifie them, with any impartial sober man. If sin be evil, and displease God, and deserve damnation, he that most fully and carefully avoideth it, is the honestest and the wisest man. You will not blame your child or servant for being loth to offend and disobey you even in the smallest matter. You like not him that offereth you the *huff abuse*, so well as him that offereth you *none*. You had rather be well then have the least disease. You will not take a little poison, nor would you feel a little of bell: Why then should we not avoid the least sin so far as we are able? If sinning be good, then Devils are the best creatures, and Angels and Christ (in his manhood) the worst. But if sin be the greatest evil, What will you call those men that do not only wilfully commit it, but plead for it, and reproach those that would fain avoid it? Or what if some of those that you reproach, are mistaken in some point, and will

that to be a sin that is none ? Or what if you think it to be no sin which they scruple ? Will you blame a man that loves God , to be afraid of that which he suspecteth may offend him ? Or will you blame him that cares for his salvation , to make as sure of it as he can ? and to keep as far from the brink of hell as he able ? How is it that you observe not that your very reproaches do confute themselves ? What is it that you are offended at in the servants of the Lord ? Is it Good or Evil ? Surely it is some fault or other of theirs, that you will pretend to be the cause. For scarce any but the Devil himself will openly and professedly oppose Goodness under the name of Goodness. And if it be a (real or supposed) fault that you speak against them for , doth it not intimate that they should avoid all faults as far as they are able ? And yet will you at the same time reproach them for being too strict and fearful to offend ? as if it were their fault that they are unwilling to be faulty ?

But let us hear what God saith of this. Prov. 14. 9. [Fools make a mock at sin.] vers. 34. [Righteousness exalteth a Nation : but sin is a reproach to any people.] And yet you would make the avoiding it, a reproach.) Gen. 4. 7. [If thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted ? and if thou dost not well, sin lieth at the door.] Numb. 32. 23. [Be sure your sin will find you out.] Jam. 1. 15. [Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.] 1 Thes. 5. 22. [Abstain from all appearance of evil.] Matth. 12. 36, 37. [But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement : For by thy words thou shalt be justified ; and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.] Matth. 5. 19. [Whosoever shall break one of the least of these Commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven.] vers. 22. [But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgement — but whosoever shall say, Thou fool , shall be in danger of hell fire.] vers. 28. [I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart.] Vers. 34, 35 , 36, 37. [I say unto you, swear not at all : Neither by heaven for it is Gods throne : nor by the earth ; for it is his footstool : — But let your communication be Yea, Yea ; Nay, Nay ; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.] Jam. 4. 12. [But above all]

all things, my Brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest you fall into condemnation.] Epes. 5. 3, 4. [But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not once be named amongst you as becometh Saints: Neither filthyness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient but rather giving of thanks. An hundred such passages of Scripture I might recite, that might quickly satisfie you, what God expecteth, and whether it be too much preciseness to fear the smalles sin.

8. But perhaps it is the rigor of their Church discipline that maketh you offended with those that you count too pure and precise: because they will not let other men alone, but are reproofing them, and bringing them to open penitence and confession of their ope sins, and casting those out of the Communion of the Church, which do refuse it. Answ. But do they do this of themselves, or doth God command it them? Do you think that the Communion of Saints, is to be turned into a rabble of impiety? and the Church into a swine-stye? Do you not know that the Canons of the ancient Churches for many hundred years after Christ, are stricter in this Discipline by far, then those that now offend you by their strictness? And hear what the Holy Ghost saith, Lev. 19. 17. [Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.] Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17. [If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, then hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnessess every word may be established: And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man or a Publican.] 1 Cor. 5. For I verily am absent in body but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present concerning him that hath done this deed, that in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus — Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven — Now I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolat-

ter, or a rafter, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one not to eat — therefore put away from among yourselves the wicked person.] 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. [Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us — And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.] 2 John 10. [If there come any to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.] Jam. 5. 16. [Confess your faulcs one to another.] Josh. 7. 19. [Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.] Prov. 28. 13. [He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whose confesseth and forsakes them shall have mercy.] Doth not all this justifie the exercise of Discipline, and condemn the neglect of it?

9. But (saith the impious person) why make they such a difference between themselves and other men? extolling themselves as the only servants of the Lord, and condemning others as ungodly and children of the Devil, and terrifying mens consciences with the fears of hell?

Answ. If any do so against such as are sanctified and renewed, and have the Spirit of Christ, and live to God, they deal uncharitably; and if you dislike their censorousnes, so do I, and so do all the sober, considerate servants of the Lord. But if it be only against the carnal unsanctified world that they do thus, it is God that maketh the difference and not they. Do you not find the whole Scripture dividing all the world into two ranks, the godly and the ungodly? the regenerate and unregenerate? the converted and unconverted? the sanctified and unsanctified? the carnal and the spiritual? the earthly-minded and the heavenly-minded? the pardoned and unpardoned? the justified and unjustified? the children of God, and the enemies of God? the servants of God, and of the Devil? the heirs of heaven, and the heirs of hell? To prove this would be to repeat the Bible. Read Psalm 1. & 37. &c. &c. & 10. Matth. 5. Rom. 8. Job. 3. Matth. 23. & Job 3. &c. Do you not find Christ himself acquainting you before hand that one sort shall be set at his right hand in judgement, and the other at his left; and one part sent to life everlasting, and the other

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one sort shall be set at his right hand in judgement, and the other
at his left; and one part sent to life everlasting, and the other

all things, my Brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest you fall into condemnation.] Epes. 3. 3, 4. [But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not once be named amongst you as becometh Saints: Neither filthyness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient but rather giving of thanks. An hundred such passages of Scripture I might recite, that might quickly satisfie you, what God expecteth, and whether it be too much preciseness to fear the smallest sin.

8. But perhaps it is the rigor of their Church discipline that maketh you offended with those that you count too pure and precise: because they will not let other men alone, but are reproofing them, and bringing them to open penitence and confession of their oaths, and casting those out of the Communion of the Church, which do refuse it. Answ. But do they do this of themselves, or doth God command it them? Do you think that the Communion of Saints, is to be turned into a rabble of impiety? and the Church into a swine-stye? Do you not know that the Canons of the ancient Churches for many hundred years after Christ, are stricter in this Discipline by far, then those that now offend you by their strictness? And hear what the Holy Ghost saith, Lev. 19. 17. [Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.] Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17. [If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established: And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man or a Publican.] 1 Cor. 5. For I verily am absent in body but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present concerning him that hath done this deed, that in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus — Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven — Now I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idle-

er, or a rafter, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one no
not to eat — — therefore put away from among yourselves the wicked person.] 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. [Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us — — And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.] 2 John 10. [If there come any to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.] Jam. 5. 16. [Confess your faults one to another.] Josh. 7. 19. [Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.] Prov. 28. 13. [He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.] Doth not all this justifie the exercise of Discipline, and condemn the neglect of it?

9. But (saith the impious person) why make they such a difference between themselves and other men? extolling themselves as the only servants of the Lord, and condemning others as ungodly and children of the Devil, and terrifying mens consciences with the fears of hell?

Ans^w. If any do so against such as are sanctified and renewed, and have the Spirit of Christ, and live to God, they deal uncharitably; and if you dislike their censorousness, so do I, and so do all the sober, considerate servants of the Lord. But if it be only against the carnal unsanctified world that they do thus, it is God that maketh the difference and not they. Do you not find the whole Scripture dividing all the world into two ranks, the godly and the ungodly? the regenerate and unregenerate? the converted and unconverted? the sanctified and unsanctified? the carnal and the spiritual? the earthly-minded and the heavenly-minded? the pardoned and unpardoned? the justified and unjustified? the children of God, and the enemies of God? the servants of God, and of the Devil? the heirs of heaven, and the heirs of hell? To prove this would be to repeat the Bible. Read Psalm 1. & 37. &c. Ps. & 10. Matth. 5. Rom. 8. Job. 3. Matth. 23. 1. Job 3. &c. Do you not find Christ himself acquainting you before hand that one son shall be set at his right hand in judgement, and the other at his left; and one part sent to life everlasting, and the other

to everlasting punishment ? Matth. 25. Do they speak any more of the everlasting torments, the worm that dyeth not, the fire that unquenchable, then Christ himself hath done ? Matth. 13. 2 Thes. 1. &c. Do you love to be flattered into Hell ? and deceived in matter of everlasting consequence ? Is it not better for you to search your hearts, and try whether you have the spirit of Christ or not, and then search the Scripture, and try whether any man be his that hath not his spirit, Rom. 8. 9. or can be saved that is not converted and born again of the spirit, Matth. 18. 3. John 3. 3, 6. [Examine your selves whether you be in the faith : Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates ? 2 Cor. 12. 5.]

10. But you will say, that the Reason of your distaste against these that are so forward in Religion is, that they are inwardly as bad as others, and as proud and worldly ; and why do they never call others in good works, as much as they do in their donations ?

Answe. 1. So they do, according to their ability : Twenty years tryal and more I have had of them since I was a Minister of Christ ; and I can truly say, that ordinarily I have known of many a shilling, if not pounds, that have come from the purses of these that you call Puritans and precise, for one groat or penny that I have known come from most others about me of their rank, to any pious and charitable use. But all that are godly, are not rich : and though Christ extolleth the widows two mites, the standers by regarded them not : Matth. 12. 42. 43. 2 Cor. 8. 11. [If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that man hath, and not according to that he hath not.] And he that hath said, [Take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them ; otherwise you have no reward of your Father which is in heaven, Matth. 6. 1.] hath hereby kept his servants from making the world acquainted with much of their deeds of charity : And for the sins of the heart that you charge them with, they are known to none but God, unless they be discovered in their lives. But malice in all ages hath been used to such unproved slanders of the servants of the Lord.

2. But suppose them as bad as malice doth imagine : is that any reason why both they and you should not be better ? It is Holiness and not sin that I am pleading for. Is their godliness and care of their salvation necessary, or not ? If it be, why do you not imitate

imitate them in that ? and if you know any fault in them, take warning and avoid it : But be not so mad as to run into Hell, because some fall in the way to Heaven, or some miss the way that seemed to go thither. Imitate not the *Judas* in Christ's family, but the rest of his Disciples, and that not in their falls, but in their faith and piety. All that shall be saved, have both *Holiness* towards God, and *Justice* and *Charity* to men. *The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits*, Jam. 3. 17. If you want the first, you are ungodly ; if the later, you are hypocrites : And if the hypocrite and the ungodly will stand snarling here at one another, they shall perish together, in that misery that will convince them that neither of them were the heirs of life : when *Saints* indeed, and none but they, shall live with Christ.

Object. *But it is but a few that are of so strict a mind and life ; and shall none be saved but these few ?*

Answ. Christ hath told you whom he will save : He will not falsifie his word, nor take the unsanctified into heaven for want of company. He hath told you that the *gate is strait, and the way narrow that leads to life, and few there be that find it*, Matth. 7. 13, 14. and that it is a little flock to whom the *Father will give the Kingdom*, Luke 12. 32. You shall not want company in heaven, nor find comfort in your company in hell.

But if you would have the number of the godly to be greater, why do you not increase it by your joyning with them ? Why do not all the Town and Parish agree together, and bind themselves in a Covenant to serve and seek the Lord, as the Israelites ; *Exo. 24. 2 Chron. 15. 12, 13.* O happy people that will thus accord, and heartily perform it.

And now, Beloved Hearers, I have finished this first Part of my task, and proved to you the *Necessity of a Holy life* ; That *One thing is needful*, while you pittifullly cumber your selves about many things, is the message that from Christ I have been hitherto delivering to you. What say you ? Are you yet resolved to seek this *One thing* with the chiefest of your desires, and care, and labour, or are you not ? Dare any one of you say that you have not heard that which should resolve a sober considerate man ? I think you dare not. But if you dare, I am sure you shall never be able to make it good, and justify your words, to God, or to

your Consciences at last, or to any wise impartial person. Now take your choice, whether you will now be *S A I N T S* and for ever like *A N G E L S*; or now be like *B R U T E S*, and for ever like *D E V I L S*: For one of these must be your case, as sure as you have heard these words.

FINIS.

A
S A I N T
OR A
B R U T E.

The Second Part.

Clearly *Proving* by *Reason* as well as
Scripture: 1. In general, that *Holiness* is *Best*,
and *Necessary* to our felicity. 2. Particularly,
that it is *Best*, 1. For *Societies*; 2. For individual *persons*;
And more distinctly, 1. That
it is the only way of *Safety*. 2. Of *Honesty*.
3. The most *Gainful* way. 4. The most *Honourable*.
5. The most *Pleasant*; And there-
fore to be *chosen* by all that will obey true *Rea-*
son, and be *Happy*.

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MONKOS

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A Saint or a Brute.

The Second Part.

CHAP. I.

Holiness and its fruits are the Best part: Wherein the Happiness of Saints consisteth.

Luke 10.42.

But One thing is Needful: and Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.



Hough I have before taken up this latter part of the Text by way of Motive, in the Conclusion of the former Part of this *Treatise*, I am very loth that a subject of so great importance should be so lightly passed over: And therefore by Gods assistance, I shall attempt a fuller handling of it. The *Necessity* of *Holiness*, I have spoken of already: It is the *Goodness* of it that I am next to speak of.

And before I enter upon it, let me intreat thee Reader, who ever thou art that openest this Book, to remember that I am writing and thou art reading of the greatest and highest masters in the world; and therefore come not to it with common affections, and read not this as thou wouldest do a History or a Rhetorical Oration, to find delight for a curious mind; but con-

sing thy self a Scholar to Christ, with reverence take thy leave from him, as that which thou camest into the world to Learn, which all thy comforts, thy hopes, thy safety, and thy even happiness depend upon.

And here in the entrance, I will freely tell you what moved me to fall upon this subject, and be so earnest with you in this point. One thing is the observation of the *carelessness* and *wilfulness* of the most, that live in the neglect of Holiness and Everlasting Life, for all that can be said to persuade them to a wiser course: While they all profess themselves to be Christians, and to take the Scripture for the Word of God, and confess this Word in particular to be true, that it is Heaven and Holiness that are the most Necessary, and most to be desired and sought after, yet will they not be moved to *Live* according to this *Profession*, nor to *Love* that *Most* which they confess to be the *Best*, nor to *seek* that *first* which they confess to be most *Needful*. They have the case here decided by the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and as plainly, and fully, and peremptorily decided as they could wish. If they were Infidels, and understood but the Law of Nature, even *Reason* might tell them that there is no doubt of it, but that Eternal Life is more to be sought after then transitory things: And yet they live as if the case had never been decided by Christ or by reason; or as if they had never heard of any Life but this: Look into most Towns, and see whether there be not more at *Martha's* work, (and worse) then at *Mary's*. Look into most families, and see whether they be not *Martha*, troubling themselves with many things, when the *part* is almost cast aside. Even in the Families of *Lords*, *Kings*, and *Gentlemen*, that are doubly obliged to God, and *more* to be wiser then the ignorant *Vulgar*, the masters of their houses are turned out of doors, or thrust into a corner, and the *parts* of their bodies do take up the day. How many *Martha's* and one *Mary*, shall we find among both *Rich* and *Poor*?

Yea that is not the worst, but they that are so blind and wicked as to *choose* the *worse* part *themselves*, would have all about them do so too; And as *Martha* grudged at *Mary's* practice, and complained to Christ against her, so these repine at the choice of the *Godly*, and think them but melancholy crack-brain'd persons that make more ado for their salvation then they need: And they are not content to keep such ungodly thoughts in their brains,

to their *Own* damnation, but they must be the Devils mouth to spit reproach in the face of Holiness, and consequently in the face of Christ, as if they bid defiance to the Lord, and would make it their employment to jeere and scorn mens souls from Heaven. If one in a family do with *Mary* choose the better part (though without any neglect of their calling in the world,) the rest make a wonder of them, and some deride them: and some hate and vilifie and threaten them, and few will imitate them: and who more forward to distaste and despise them then the Masters of the Families that are bound to teach and lead them in that way ! so that a poor soul (even in a Land and Age that countenanceth Holiness more then almost any other in the world) can scarcely sit at the feet of Christ, and Learn his word, and seek his Kingdom and Righteouiness first, but they are gazed at, and censured and derided, as if they did some very foolish, needless, yea or wicked thing ! As if it were the only folly for a man to follow *Jesus Christ*, and obey his God, and save his soul, and do that work with greatest diligence, for which he is a man, for which he hath his Life, and Time, and Mercies, and which if he neglect, he is lost for ever ! The Lord have Mercy upon the poor deluded world ! whence comes this general damp and dottage upon the *understandings* and the *hearts of men* ! of *Great men*, of *Learned men*, of men that are accounted wise in the world !

It is *Good and Evil* that constituteth all that wonderful difference that is between the *Reasonable* creatures, both here and hereafter : The *Good* of *Holiness*, and the *evil* of *sin* do make the difference, between the *Godly* and the *wicked* : the *Good* of *Everlasting Happiness*, and the *Evil* of *Everlasting Misery*, doth make the difference between the *Glorified* and the *Damned*. *Goodness in General* is so naturally the object of mans will, that *Evil as Evil* cannot be desired, and *Good as Good* cannot be hated. What then is the matter that few attain the greatest good, and few will scape the greatest misery ? It is because they would not *Choose that Good*, and *refuse the way and cause of Misery* : But how cometh it to pass that men will make no wiser a choice ? Is the case so *doubtful* that they cannot be resolved in it ? every man would have that which he *thinks* is best for him. Why do men follow after wealth, or pleasure, or vngift in the world, but because they take it to be *Best* for them ? Why

do they set so light by *Holiness*, and Christ and Heaven, because they apprehend them not to be *Best for them*? *Wise* men refuse, and obstinately against all persuasions refuse a *Holy life*, if they took it practically to be *Best for them*? what ! will they *conspire* their *own destruction*? do they long to do themselves a *Mischief*, and the greatest *Mischief* in the world? No, that's not the case; But the matter is this: Their *senses* draw them another way; Their *eye*, their *ear*, their *talte*, their *feeling*, every *sense* hath a *Pleasure* of its *Own*, and this *sense* or *flesh* is violent and unreasonable, and would fain be satisfied: and *Reason* that was given us to Rule it, is bribed and blinded and perverted by it, and so is ready to a *Servant* to obey it, and to take its part; and the *fleshy* mind discerneth not the *things of God*, for they are spiritually discerned: the *Will* also and the *Affections* are by the *byas* of a *fleshy* inclination corrupted, and habitually lean to the *fleshy* part: And that which men *Love*, they will *easily* think well of, and are glad of any *thing* like *Reason* to defend it; and the which is against the *Inclination* of the *Will*, will hardly be thought well of, and any *thing* like *Reason* will serve against it. This depravation of the *mind* and *will* of man, enslaved and ruled by the *Flesh* or *sensuality*, is the very cause that most men will not choose the *Better part*, and so the cause of their perpetual misery. And till the *Holy Ghost* send in a heavenly light of *Wisdom* into the *mind* so shew them the true difference between the *Good* and the *Evil*, and a new *Inclination* into the *Will*, that shall turn their *hearts* from the *Evil* to the *Good*, they will still go on, and the *matters of God* will seem foolishness to them, and they will take those men for the *veryest fools* that follow the *Wisdom* of the *Lord*, and provide most carelessly for *eternal life*; and they will take those for the *wisest men*, that are most *contrary* to the *God of Wisdom*, and that dare leap most fearlessly into *Hell*; Or if this be not their *Opinion*, but conviction force them to a wiser kind of *language*, yet will it be their *Practical estimation* and their *Hearts*, as their *Choice* and *Lives* will easily declare: For that which is born of the *flesh* is *flesh*, and that which is born of the *spirit* is *spirit*, *Joh. 3.6.* The *fleshy* man will have a *fleshy* *mind* and *will*, and openly or secretly will *Live after the flesh*, and such are the *heirs of death*, *Rom. 8. 5, 7, 13.* *Fleshy* generation cannot make a *spiritual* *mind* or *heart* in any, but it must be *spiritual*

Spiritual Regeneration : and therefore except a man be born again of the spirit as well as of water, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Job. 3. 3, 5.

This inward difference of *Inclinations* is the true cause of the difference of the judgements and the courses of men, about the matters of God and their salvation.

This is it that makes so many to think *none wise*, but those that are more dangerously mad than men in Bedlam ; and that makes so many others stand in doubt as men *unresolved* what to choose, and what course to follow : As if it were really a difficult point for a man to be resolved in, Whether it be *best* and *wisest* to follow the teachings of God, or of the flesh : and to seek first the Kingdom and Righteousness of God, or to make a pudder for nothing in the world ; and to claw this itching flesh a while, though they must smart for it for ever, or to master the flesh and live to God !

In a word, the world are half *unresolved*, [whether it be better to be *Holy* with Gods promise of *Eternal Glory*, or to take the *Pleasures of sin* for a season, and neglect this *Holiness*, though this course be threatened by the *Living God with Everlasting torments*?] This is the true state of the Question, which I say *one part* of the world doth seem to be *unresolved* in, and *another part* are *resolved* on the *worser side*, against their souls and a *Holy life* ; and *only those* that the illuminating sanctifying spirit bath *resolved*, do choose the *needful better part*.

The reason of this *distracted judgement* of the most, is *within themselves*. It is not because that there is any *such difficulty* in the case, as should put a wise man to a stand ; Nor it is not because they have not sufficient *evidence* in the *word*, or that God denied them *Teachers, Books, or any Necessary Means* for their information. The *Light* is among them ; but they *Love it not* because their *hearts and deeds are evil*, and their *darkness* doth *not comprehend it* ; and this is their *delusion*, and their *condemnation*, Job. 1. 6, 7, 8. & 3. 19.

When I am preaching to a congregation of many hundred or thousand souls, if the salvation of all that people did lie upon any other question no harder then this that we have in hand, so it were such as fleshly interest, and corrupted minds and wills had no quarrel against, how easily, how surely should I save the souls of all that heard me ! Reader, let me have thy judgement. If

the Question were, Whether Light or Darkness be the Better? Whether a dead corps be better then a Living man? Whether a carriage for a day, or a Rich habitation for term of life be better? Whether as much drink as will make thee drunk, or a nights lodging with a whore, be better then Lands and Lordships for thy life time, or for a thousand years? Whether one sweet cup with shame and beggary all thy life after, or one bitter draught with perpetual prosperity, should be rather chosen? Whether a sick man were better take an unpleasing medicine that would cure him, or a pleasant poysion that would kill him? Whether he were better pay a little to the Physician, or dye to save his money? Whether that Prince be wise that will sell his Kingdom for a cup of wine, or for childrens rackets? Or whether that child be vertuous that cannot abide his Fathers sight or house or commands, but loveth better to do that which he knows displeaseth him, or to tumble in the dirt with swine? I say, if any of these were the Question to be Resolved, and the salvation of all that heard me lay upon the true Resolution, I leave it to your own judgement. Whether I were not like to save the souls of all that heard me? And yet in a case as clear in it self, and much more clear, how few do we prevail with? Is not the Question [Whether God or the Creature, Holiness or Sin, Earth or Heaven, Short or Everlasting pleasures should be preferred?] as plain to a wise man as any of those that I mentioned before? Is it not as plain a case to a man of judgement, [Whether Holiness, with Everlasting joys, be better then fleshly pleasures with damnation?] as whether a Kingdom be better then a Pagle, or Gold then dirt, or health then sickness? Yet do your salutations lie upon this Question, this easie Question. I must again repeat it; All your salutations lie upon the practical resolution of this easie Question. Be but Resolved once that God is Best for you, and Heaven is Best for you, and accordingly make your Resolute Choice, and faithfully Prosecute it, and God will be Yours, Heaven will be yours as sure as the Promise of God is true. But if you will not Choose God and Glory as your Best, but will Choose the world and simple pleasures as Better for you, you shall have no better then you chose, and shall suffer a double condemnation, for neglecting and refusing so great salvation.

You hear now by mens talk, and you see by their lives that the world is divided upon this Question, What it is that is Best for a

man, and which is his Best and Wisest course? One part (and the greater) think in their hearts that present prosperity is best, because they think that the promised happiness of the life to come is a thing uncertain; or if there be such a thing, they may have it after the pleasures of sin; These are the Infidels.

Another part have a superficial dead Opinion that Heaven and Holiness are Best: but the Love of the flesh and the world lyeth deeper at their hearts, and beareth the greater sway in their lives: and these are the Hypocrites; that is, Christians in Opinion and Profession, and so much of their Practice as will stand with their fleshly interest, but Infidels in their Practical estimation, and at the Heart, and in the reserves and secret bent of their lives.

Another part, being illuminated and sanctified from above, Believe the Certainty and Excellency of Glory, and see the vanity and vexation of this life, and taste the sweetness of the Love of God, and perceive the Necessity and sweetness of that Holiness, which others so abhor, and hereupon give up themselves to God, and set themselves to seek for the Immortal treasure, and make it the principal care of their hearts and business of their lives to escape damnation, and live with Christ in endless Glory.

All the world consisteth of these three sorts of men, Infidels, Hypocrites, and true Believers. Now the Question is, Which of these three are in the right? Both the other do condemn the Hypocrite that haltereth between two opinions; and One thinks that Baal is God, that the World is Best, and therefore he gives up himself to it: and the other thinks, that The Lord is God, and Heaven is best, and therefore he gives up himself to it. And if it would do any thing with those that doubt, towards the turning of the scales, to tell you which side Christ is on, its told you here in my Text, as plain as the tongue of man can speak [One thing is Needful: Mary hath chosen that Good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

The Doctrine which I am now to handle to you from the plain words of the Text, is this.

Doct. That those that prefer the Learning of the Word of Christ, to guide them by Holiness to Everlasting Happiness, before all the lower matters of this world, are they that choose the Better part, even that which shall never be taken from them.

If now the word of Christ alone would serve your turn, I had done my work: I needed not to go any further: You would be now resolved, that Heaven and Holiness is best, and would set your hearts and lives to seek it; and so it would be your own for ever. But this Text hath long stood in the Gospel, and men have heard and read it often, and yet the most are not perswaded; and therefore I must try to open it a little farther to you, and plead it with you, and work the Reason of it upon your minds.

Reader, our business is but to enquire, *What it is that is best for Man to set his heart on and seek after in his Life, and Enjoy for ever?* I say, it is the *Everlasting Enjoyment of God in Heaven*: For Christ saith so. If thou think otherwise, let us debate the case. If thou believe as I do, *Live as thou professest to believe*. If men did but deeply and soundly know *what it is that is best for them*, it would set right their hearts and lives, and make them happy. But not knowing this, is it that keepeth them from God and Holiness, and everlastingly undoes them.

Though I have often opened this heretofore on other occasions, yet my present subject now requireth, 1. That I tell you, *What that is that here is called [The Good part.]* 2. *What it is that is set against it, and by fleshly minds, preferred before it?* And having briefly opened these two things, I shall come to the Comparison, and shew you *which is the better part*.

1. That which Christ calls here [that good part.] is 1. Principally, the end of man, or our everlasting Happiness with God in Heaven. 2. Subordinately, the Means by which it is attained. 3. That Happiness which is the end, comprehendeth in it these particulars, which if you distinctly apprehend, you will much the better understand the nature and excellency of it.

1. The true Believer hath the *small beginnings*, and *earnings*, and *foretastes* of the *Everlasting Blessedness* in this Life, in his approaches to God, and living upon him by *Faith* and *Love*, and his believing apprehensions of the *Favour of God*, the *Grace*,

Christ, and the Happiness which in Heaven he shall enjoy for ever.

2. At death, the souls of true Believers do go to Christ, and enter upon a state of Happiness.

3. At the last day, the body shall be raised and united to the soul, and the Lord Jesus Christ will come in glory to judge the world, where he will openly absolve and justify the Righteous, when he condemneth the ungodly, and will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that do believe, and the Saints shall also judge the world, and be themselves adjudged to everlasting Glory.

4. Their everlasting habitation shall be in the Heavens, even near unto God, and in the presence of his Glory.

5. Their company will be only Blessed Spirits, even the holy Angels and glorified Saints, with whom we shall be One Body, and constitute the *New Jerusalem*, and be perfectly one in God for ever.

6. Their Bodies shall be perfected and made immortal, spiritual, incorruptible and glorious bodies, shining as the Stars in the Celestial Firmament: No more subject to hunger, and thirst, or cold, or weariness, or shame, or pain, nor any of the frailties that now adhere unto them, but be made like the glorified body of Christ.

7. The Souls of the Saints united to these Bodies shall also be Perfected, having far larger capacity to know God and enjoy him then now we have; being freed from all ignorance, error, unbelief, pride, hard-heartedness, and whatsoever sin doth now accompany us; and perfected in every part of the Image of God upon us.

8. The eyes of the Glorified Body shall in Heaven have a Glory to behold that is suitable to their Bodily capacity: Heaven being not a place where the Essence of God is confined, but where a prepared glory will be manifested to make Happy the Angels and Saints with Christ. And whatever other senses the Glorified Bodies shall then have (whether formally or eminently, we cannot now conceive what they will be) they will all be satisfied with suitable Delights from God.

9. The Blessed person of our Redeemer in our Nature Glorified, will there be the everlasting object of our delights, admiration and fruition: An object suitable to the eye of the Glorified Body.

it self. We shall for ever live in the sight of *his* face, and in the sense of *his* unspeakable *Love*.

10. The Glorified *Soul* (whether mediately or immediately) shall behold the Infinite most *Blessed God*, and by knowing him, be perfected in knowledge: As we shall see the person of Jesus Christ, and the glory of God with open face, and not as in a glass as now we do, so we shall know *so much* of the *Essence* of the Deity as we are capable of, to our felicity.

11. With the Knowledge of God and the Beatifical Vision will be joyned a *perfect Love unto him*, and closure with his blessed *will*: So that to *Love him*, will be the everlasting employment of the soul.

12. This *Love* will be drawn forth into everlasting *praise*; and it will be our work before the Throne of his Glory, to *magnifie the Lord for ever*.

13. In all this *Love*, and *Praise*, and *Glory*, and in the full fruition of the Eternal God, we shall *Rejoyce* with *full* and *perfect Joy*, and we shall have *full content, delight and rest*.

14. In all this *Blessedness* and *Glory* of the *Saints*, the *Glory of God himself* will *shine*, and *Angels* shall *admire* it, and the condemned spirits with *anguish* shall *discern* it, that God may be *Glorified in our Glory*.

15. In all this *Happiness of Believers, and his own Glory*, the Lord will be *well pleased*, and that *Blessed Will* which is the *Beginning and the End of all*, will be accomplished, and will have an *Eternal complacency*, as the *Saints* shall have an *endless complacency in God*.

— This is the *Glory* promised to the *Saints*; This is that *Good part* which they *choose*. I cite not the *Texts* of *Scripture* that prove all this, because the things are all so plainly and frequently expressed in the *premises*. And I shall have occasion to do somewhat of this anon. And so (in brief) I have told you what the *Good part* is.

2. We are next to enquire, *What it is that is put by worldy, carnal men, into the other end of the scales*, and is set up in comparison with all this *Everlasting Glory*? Yea what it is that is preferred by ungodly men before it? What is it that *sin and the world will do for men*? What do they find that *lose the Lord*? What do they get that *miss of Heaven*? What do they choose, to *refuse the Meedful, Better part*?

And here I am even amazed at that which I must give you an account of ; O wonderful astonishing thing, that ever such base unworthy trifles should by Reasonable men be put into any comparison with God ! Wonderful, that so much madness and wickedness can enter into the mind and heart of man, as to let go all this Glory for a toy ? And yet more wonderful, that this should be the case of the greatest part of men on earth ! And yet more wonderful, that so many make so mad a choice, even when the case is opened to them, and plainly opened, and frequently opened ; and when they are earnestly entreated to be wiser, and implored to make a better choice !

In a word, All that is set against the Lord, and All that is preferred before this Everlasting Life, and All the portion of ungodly men, is no more then this ; *The Pleasure of sin for a season : The satisfying of the flesh : A little ease, and pelf, and fair words from men as miserable as themselves ; and all this but for a little, a very little time, when Temperance is as sweet at least, a little that is excessive or forbidden, in wealth, or meat, or drink, or cloathes, or lust, or other fleshly pleasures, is the Joy, and the Heaven, and the God of the ungodly. The fleshly pleasures which are common to the beasts, and a little vainglory among men, and this for a short uncertain time, (and then no more) no everlasting punishment) this is the chosen portion of the ungodly. This is All for which they refuse the Lord, and All for which they refuse a Holy life : This is All, which they part with, and part with their Everlasting Peace ! This is All, which they have for Heaven and their salvation ! and All for which they part with their souls ! To the everlasting flame of sin and sinners, be known that this was All ! To the shalling of our own hearts, that sometime were guilty of this madness, I shall tell you, that this is All ! To the humbling of the best, no less then the drossing of the wicked, and the amazement of mankind, I shall tell you, this is All ! This dirt, this dream, this delusion, this madness, the wicked have for God and Glory ! This Nonsense, this folly, this obstinately preferring and choose, before him, the world, O wonderful madness, stupidity, and folly ! How wilful ! and so uncureable ! till tender grace, and the love of God, can cure it, in them that shall be saved.*

Well, the ballance is now set before you, in the One end and in the other. You see, that

choose, and the part that is chosen by the rest of the world; And are you not yet resolved which is Best? and which to choose?

TWO sorts I look to meet with here, to whom I shall apply my self distinctly, before I come to the comparative work. First some will tell me that all these are needless words; and that there is no man so senseless as to think that Temporal things are better then Eternal, or the world then God, or sin then Holiness.

Answ. O that this were true! how happy then were all the world? I grant that many are superficially convinced, that are not converted; and that many have a slight opinion that Heaven and Holiness is best, that yet have no Love to it, and will not set it above All. But their practical judgement doth not go along with their Opinions. Thy relish the world as sweetest unto them. In the prevailing deepest thoughts of their hearts, they set most by the pleasures of this world; Why else is their Heart most towards them? Why else do they choose them, and refuse to Live a Holy life? Why have they no delight in God? and why have we so much ado with them, to bring them to a heavenly mind and life, and all in vain? What! will not men be perswaded to choose that which they know is best for them?

Object. Temptations are strong, and men are weak, and so men go against their knowledge.

Answ. 1. What do Temptations prevail with you to do? Is it not to think well of sinful pleasures, and to think more hardly of the wayes of God? Is it not to like a worldly fleshly life better than a Holy life? If not, how can you follow those temptations? And if it be so, then they draw you for that time to think that fleshly pleasures are the better part.

2. But if indeed it be as you say, you are the most unexampleable miscreants in the world. What! do you know that God is best for you, and yet will you fly from him? Do you know that heaven is the only happiness, and yet will you seek this world before it? Do you know what is Best for you, and will not have it? and what is worst, and yet will keep it? Will you go to hell and damn yourselves, and know that you do so? Yea,

that while we day by day entreat you to the contrary? If this be the case of any one of you, the God of Justice shall teach you to know what you are doing, by his everlasting vengeance: Heaven and earth shall be witness against you; your own Consciences, and such Confessions of your own shall bear witness against you, that you *justly perish*, and are damned, because you would be damned, and are shut out of Heaven, because you would not be persuaded to come thither.

Object. *But we hope we may have Both, Pleasure here and Heaven hereafter: and that we may be saved by the mercy of God and the blood of Christ, without the sanctification of the Spirit, and though we do not live a Holy life.*

Ans^w. And who gave you these hopes? Is it God on whom you pretend to trust? or the Devil that doth deceive you? Certainly not God; For he hath told you over and over, that he will save none but the sanctified, Acts 26. 18. and that except a man be born again, even of the Spirit as well as of water, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, John 3. 3, 5. and that without holiness none shall see the Lord, Heb. 12. 14. And is it God that persuadeth you that his Word is false? Doubtless it is the Devil. When God had told Adam and Eve, [That in the day that they did eat the forbidden fruit, they should die the death] was it not the Serpent that gave them hopes of living, and told them that they should not die? If you beat that pass that you will take off you to trust in God, and yet will not believe him, but your trust is but trusting that God is a lyar, you are as softish in your presumption, as Heathens are in their Infidelity: For who is worse? he that believeth that there is no God (as Atheists do) or he that believeth that God is a Lyar, which is to be no God and worse?

If therefore you do believe indeed that Heaven is Best, you must needs believe that Holiness is Necessary; yea and Best too, when Heaven consisteth so much in perfected holiness. And therefore you must choose and seek with greatest diligence, that Happiness which you confess is Best, or never hope that it will be yours. O did you at the heart believe it to be Best, and that for you, you would love it, and seek it, and be a holy people without delay. You cannot so turn away from that which you heartily judge to be Best for you indeed.

But the most that I have to deal with, are they that cannot be persuaded at the heart, but that feasting, and drinking, and lust,

and

and wealth, and worldly honour are *Better for them than a Holy life*, with such promises of Heaven as God hath left us. For as for most ungodly men have this persuasion next their hearts, whether they observe it, and know of it, or not.

Now with such deluded unbelieving souls, I am next to plead this weighty cause. If thou that Readest this be one of them, that taketh a *worldly felicity*, with *Gods threatenings*, to be *Better and rather to be chosen*, then *Holiness with his Promise* of future happiness, I will now debate the case with thee, and undertake by the light of Christ, to open the horrible folly of thy mistake. And if I do not give thee such sound and weighty *undeniable evidence*, that no man of Reason should resist, to prove the *choice of Holy persons* to be the *wisest*, and their *parts the best*, I will give thee leave to call me a Liar, and a deceiver for ever.

CHAP. I I.

What in Reason he w^tst do that would be certainly resolved which is the best part and way. And who shall be Judge.

But before we come to the debate, I have two *Questions* to put to thee, that in Reason must be first resolved.

The first is, *Whether thou art willing to know the Truth*, and resolved to choose the best part when thou knowest it? It is in vain for me or any man to *Reason* with thee, if thou wouldst not know, and to shew thee the *Truth*, if thou hast it, and wilt not acknowledge it when thou seest it; and to bring thee in the clearest light, if thou be before hand resolved to shut thy eyes. And if thou *wilt not choose* that which thy *conscience* shall be convinced thou shouldest choose, as being *absolutely best*, to what purpose then should it be *revealed* to thee? Wouldst thou be a *happy man* not? Wouldst thou have *Joy* or *Sorrow*? *Good* or *Evil*? See here, and before thou goest any further, make me this *Promiss* before the *Lord*, [That thou *wilt not wilfully* resist the light that thou *wilt choose*, and *presently*, and *resolvedly* choose that that thy *conscience* shall tell thee upon certain evidence, is the best *Promiss* but this, which no man of Reason can make]

and then we may make something of our debate.

My seconde Question is, [Who it is that shall be Judge between us in this debate? or whose witness is it is that you will take for enuyant?]

I am willing to stand to the Judgement of any that understand the case, and are *impartial*. I hope you will consent that we shall take the most competent witnesses and Judge. And if so, 1. You know that the Devil is no competent Judge. It is he that persuadeth you that present delights are the better part, and rather to be chosen then a Holy life. But he is Gods enemy, and therefore no wonder if he speake against him: He is your deadly enemy; and therefore no wonder if he would deceive you: He is cast out of heaven himself, and would not have you possess the room that he hath lost: He is a wicked lying spirit: and therefore is not to be believed. He is a murderer from the beginning, and therefore will not speak for your salvation, Job. 8. 44. If the Devil be to be believed, then none are wiser then the ungodly sensual worldly men; and none are in a worse condition then those that are despised by the world for Holiness, and that suffer all things for a Life unseen. But the enmity that is planted in your very natures against the Devil, I hope, will help you to confess, that he must not be the Judge.

2. And truly *Ignorant ungodly men are unmeet Judges*. And it is they that bawle against Religion, and speake against they know not what. 1. They are *Blind* by nature, and more blind by customary sin: And must a *Blind* man be your Judge or witness, in a case of everlasting moment? 2. They are *Inexperienced* in the ways of God. How can they judge of a state that they *were never in*, and of a way that they *never went*? They *never tryed* the work of the new birth, nor *never tryed* the holy exercise of faith, or Love or any Grace; and therefore you may as well take the Judgement of a simple man concerning another countrey that was never there, or concerning Navigation, that never was at sea, or concerning Learning that never read a book, or concerning Musick that never toucht an Instrument, as the Judgement of an unchristian concerning Holiness, and Communion with God: unless it be those that have a common convincing light, that constrain them to approve of that which they neglect.

3. And *particular you roun fleshy and fleshy minds are unmeet Judges*

Judges of the case: For they also are *Blind* and *unexperienced*: They are not suited unto spiritual things. To which I may add, 3. That they and all ungodly men are *Partisan* in the case, and therefore unfit to be witnesses, or Judges? All the Scripture speaks against the Devil, and the wicked, and the lusts of the flesh: and therefore they are *a party*, even the party that is to be ejected. 4. Yea they are *enemies*, and therefore their testimony or judgement is not to be regarded. And what else will speak a word against a Holy life, but the *Devil*, the *flesh* and *wicked men*? Not any. And therefore let it be concluded that these are incompetent Judges in the case.

But *who then shall be Judge*? Let *God* be Judge, let *Christ* be Judge; Who *can*, who *dare* refuse *this Judge*? Refuse him not; for none but he is fit and competent: Refuse him not; for he *will* be Judge whether you will or no; and therefore your refusal will be vain. 1. He is *most wise*, and knoweth all things; and therefore cannot be deceived. 2. He is *Infinitely Good*, and therefore cannot do any wrong: He is *impartial* and respecteth not the persons of the greatest; He is *most just*, and therefore cannot pass an *unjust sentence*. 3. He only is the Judge that hath *full authority* to make a final decision of the case. 4. And in a word, he is *so absolutely perfect*, that he is *liable* to no *just exceptions*, nor can men or Devils have any thing to say against his judgement. Are you agreed then that *God* shall be your Judge? Will you take that for the *bearer part*, which he calls *his* *throne*? If so, the *controversie* is at an end. The living *God* hath given us his judgement long ago. If you ask me, *Where*, He tell you anon, when I have examined some of the *witnesses* of the case.

And though I am resolved to *own* no proper final Judge but *God*, yet under him there are many *witnesses* that are worth the hearing. Indeed I am content to refer the cause to *any* *man* that doth but *know what he saith*, and is *not unfaithful*, (reserving to *God* the *final judgement*.)

And, 1. Go to the *wisest* men on earth, and let *them* be *witnesses*. What think you of all the Prophets and Apostles, and all the ancient Fathers of the Church? Were not these *wiser* than you, or than the foolish scorners that revile the way which they never went, and speake ill of that which they understand not? All Prophets and Apostles were not *for* *Holiness*,

as fitfully worldly life, then I will be of your mind. But if they all as with one heart and mouth do cry down sin, and cry up Holiness, why should you then refuse their Testimony? Are you wiser then all these?

2. What think you of all the godly able Ministers of Christ that are now alive, or ever were? Are they not wiser then you, and a few drunkards that have scarce wit enough to do the Devils service without such sottishness as shames his cause? Have none of Christs Ministers, that spend their days in studying and searching after knowledge, more wit even in the matters of God, then a carnal Gentleman, or ignorant malicious wretch, that never used the means for Knowledge as these have done? In any other matter you will allow men that have made it the study of their lives to know more then you. If you want counsel for your *states*, you'll go to one that hath studied the *Law*. If you are sick, you will sooner seek advice of one that hath made it the business of his life to understand diseases and remedies, then to one that never studied it. You'll sooner take the judgement of every *tradesman* in his *trade*, then your own or anothers that never learned it. Allow but those men to be competent witnesses that have bent their thoughts and prayers and cares this way, and the controversie is resolved. For what is it that all our Sermons plead for but Holiness in order to *Everlasting Happiness*? What is it that so many thousand Books are written for, but for Holiness? Open the Books of the wisest men, and see which side it is that they are on? Go to the wisest ablest Ministers, and aske them which is the better part?

3. If *Wisdom* suffice not, let the *best* and *honestest* men be witnesses. Who better then Christ, then his Apostles, then all the holy Martyrs and Confessors of the Church, and all the Doctors and faithful Ministers of Christ? which side think you were they on that laid down their lives for the cause of Christ? sure they that would rather burn at a stake, or suffer all the scorns and torments of the world, then forsake a Holy heavenly life, did take it to be better then all the pleasures or profits of the world. Sure all the holy Doctors and Pastors of the Church that lived so Holy lives themselves, and spent their days in Praying, and watching, and meditating, and preparing for the life to come; contemning all the vanities of the world, did think that this was the better

part, which they followed after with so much diligence and pi-
ence as they did.

Hear me a few words, you proud and self-conceited sinners, that will plead for your ungodly ways, and plead against a holy life, and quarrel with the most faithful administrations of your Pastors : It is a matter of Everlasting moment that *you* and *we* do differ about : and which of us is liker to be in the right ? I confess I am a weak and ignorant man ; but is the scottish ungodly quarreller any wiser then I am ? How camest thou man to thy knowledge, that thou thinkest thy self wiser then me, and all the Pastors of the Church ? My Knowledge that is but little, hath cost me almost forty years hard study ? Hast thou read and medita-
ted and studied more ? Hadst thou better helps and means of Knowledge ? God usually giveth his gifts in the painful use of means. If I should think my self wiser in thy trade, and able to control thee, thou wouldest judge me a self-conceited fool. What hast thou done for thy knowledge that I have not done ? Hast thou prayed for it day and night ? So have I. Hast thou had any private way of Learning that no man knoweth ? Truly I have marvelled at the faces of many ignorant careless men, that they do not blush when we have thus expostulated with them, when they quarrel with their Teachers, and set against them with as brazen a face as if they were all Doctors, or had studied forty years, and we were as they are : Yea as if they were wiser then all the Apostles, Doctors and Pastors of the Church. Were it not a wonder indeed if God should give more knowledge about the matters of salvation to a sensual voluptuous Gentleman, or to an idle droan, or a fellow that scarce ever read over the Bible, and to such as live a worldly fleshly and ungodly life, then to all his Ministers and Servants, that love his Laws, and meditate them day and night, and live in Prayer, and other holy exercises, and make it their daily care and business, to conform their hearts and lives to the holy Doctrine which they study ? Surely God will sooner reveal his mind to a diligent searcher, that feareth and loveth him, then to a lustful Epicure, or a drunken swearing, worldly sot. He that every day abusest the *Holy Ghost* that should be his Teacher, is not so likely to come to Knowledge, as he that bumbly learneth and obeyest him. It is strange evidence that most wicked men do give us to prove, that they are wiser then their Teachers : when they can scarce give

wise account of the Principles of Religion contained in a *Catechism*, they will prove themselves wise by despising wisdom, and railing at the Wise. They prove themselves Learned by reproaching the learned: They prove themselves godly enough to be saved, by hating and scorning them that are Godly; and prove themselves the servants of Christ by speaking against his service; They prove themselves wise enough to Teach or quarrel with their Teachers, by refusing to Learn, and to be any wiser, and by babling out their sinfull folly. And when they have done, they prove that their hearts for all this are as good as the *precisest*, by prating against that Holiness which is the only health and goodness of the heart, and by shewing us to our grief that they neither know what *Goodness* is, nor what is in their hearts. They prove to us that they have *Hopes* for all this, of being saved and seeing the face of God, by hating them that are *Pure in heart*, that have the promise of seeing his face, Mat. 5. 8. and by reviling or forsaking the way of salvation, and by shewing us on their souls the open Marks of the wrath of God, and of a state of condemnation. This is the Devils Logick. And this is the wisdom of the wicked. They may next go further, and prove that they are *chaste* by reviling chastity; and prove that they are *sober* by speaking against sobriety, and by wallowing in their vomit: or prove that they know all arts and trades, and sciences by reviling them: And as they now prove that they are the freemen of Christ, by shewing us the Devils fettters upon them, so if they hold out, they will shortly have nothing to prove themselves in Heaven, but by shewing us the flames of Hell which they endure.

If therefore all the *Holiest* and *wisest* men on earth may be admitted to be witnesses, then Holiness must be your Best, and all things else be nothing worth in comparison of it.

3. Moreover, if yet you would have more witness, shall those be heard that have tried both states, the state of *Sin*, and the state of *Holiness*; and that have gone both ways; and therefore are able to speak to us by experience?

If you were to take advice about any worldly business, you would choose a man of *Experience* for your Counsellor, an experienced Physicion for your bodies: and an experienced Tradesman for your work. You will sooner believe a Traveller that hath seen the places that he speaks of, (if he be honest,) than

another ; godly men have tryed both wayes. Alas they ~~have~~ known, and ~~too~~ much known the way of sin ; and they have tryed the Holy way that you dislike. I think therefore that they are competent witnesses : And if their witness be worth any thing, the cause must go against the ungodly. For their *Lives* tell you their *Judgement*. Their hatred to sin, their diligent seeking after God, their constant endeavours in a Holy course, their suffering any thing rather then forsake this Holy way, when one they have sincerely chosen it ; all these do fully acquaint you with their judgement. Do you think it is for *Nothing* that the holy servants of the Lord, do stick so close to him, and labour so constantly in his work ? surely if they had not found that this way is beyond comparison the best, you might draw them from it, into a state of ungodliness again ; at least fire and sword and torment might perswade them to forsake it. Something he findeth in it that is good, that will let go his life and all the world for it.

What say you now ! have you any just exceptions against the testimony of these *Experienced men* ? The *ungodly* cannot be competent witnesses ; for they have tryed but one side : They have had *experience* of a *prophane*, a *fleshy*, *worldly life* : but they never yet tryed a *Holy life*. And therefore how should they be fit to tell you, what *Good* is in the way of God, which they never travelled in ? Or what *Gain* is in the *Heavenly Treasure*, which they never traded for ? Or what *Beauty* is in the *face* of Christ and Glory, which they never had an *eye* of *faith* to see ? Or what *sweetness* is in the *Hidden Manna*, which they never tasted ? If you say that *many* that have tryed the way of *Godliness*, have turned from it, and are against it ! I beseech you weigh my answer.

1. It is not *One* of a *hundred* that doth so, no not in *these* *awful* *times*, when all seducers are let loose. And is *one* *man's* *judgement* more regardable then a *hundred*, yea, *many* *hundred* ?

2. Nay, it is no *One* at all ! Those that you say turn off, are only such as tryed an *Opinionative Religiousness*, and some of the *Outward duties* of Christianity, but they never tryed the *power* of a *living rooted* *faith*, nor the *predominant Love* of God in the soul, nor a *Living Hope* of the *Heavenly Glory*, nor the *suicidess* of a *Heavenly life* ; nor the *mortification* of the *fleshy* *inward* and *true* *self-denial* : These are the *vital parts* of Christianity.

which these few Apostates never tryed; though some of them have had some acquired counterfeits of them, and some good gifts of common grace, and think that none had more then they had.

Sinner, I beseech thee for the Lords sake, deal faithfully with thy poor soul, when all lies at the stake. Wilt thou take the judgement of a swaggering Gallant, or a scoffing, worldly or ungodly Sot, that none of them ever truly tried a state of Holiness: And wilt thou refuse the judgement of God, and of all his servants that have tryed it? Go to any Godly man, and ask him which of these wayes he hath found by experiance to be best? and hear what he will say to thee? He will be ashamed to hear thee make a Question of it. He will tell thee [*Alas* friend, I was once deceived by sin, and deceived with the pleasures of my flesh, and the glittering glory and riches of this world, as you are now! I once was a stranger to the life of faith, and the Hopes of Heaven, and the Holiness of the Saints. But it was by the meer delusion of the Devil, and it was the fruit of the blindness, and deadness of my heart. I knew not what I did, nor where I stood, nor what I chose, nor what I set light by! I never well considered of the matter, but carelessly followed the sway of my fleshly inclination and desires! But now I see I was the Devils slave, and my Pleasures were my fetters, and my own corrupt affections were my bondage; and I now find that I did but delude my soul; I got nothing by all that the world did for me, but provision for my after-sorrows: I had been now in Torments if I had but dyed in that condition. I would not be again in the case that I was in for all this world, or a thousand such worlds! That life that once I bought the best, hath cost me dear, even the breaking of my heart: and a thousand thousand fold dearer would have cost me, if the dearest blood, and recovering Grace of my dearest Lord had not prevented it. O had I not been unspeakably beholden to the Mercy of the Lord, even to that Mercy which I then made light of. I had been undone for ever; I had been laid under Everlasting desperation before this. Now I find that there is no life so sweet as that which I then was so loth to choose! Now it is my only grief that I was holy no sooner, and can be no more Holy then I am. O that I had more of that quickning, comforting, saving Grace! O that I were further from my former sinful fleshly state! O that I could get nearer God, though I parted with all the pro-

fficiency of this world ! I now find what I lost by my continual sin so long : but then I knew it not. O friend, as you love your soul, take warning by me, and make use of my experience, and stir up your self to God betimes !] This, or to this purpose, would the answer of an experienced person be, if you should ask him, Which is the better way ?

But if you say, that *this we would be our selves the Judges, and bring the matter into our own hands*, I answer you, 1. It is true, we would be *our selves your Helpers*, and do the best we could for your salvation : And if you will neither *help your selves*, nor give us leave to help you, take what you get by it ; we have done our part.

But, 2. I will not yet so part with you. I will further make you this reasonable offer. I demand of thee, whoever thou art that Readest these words, *Whether thou know of any man on earth that thou thinkest to be a wiser man then thy self* ? If not, thou art so like the Devil in Pride, that no wonder if thou be near him in malignity and misery. If thou do know of any wiser then thy self, go with me, or with some faithful Minister to that man, and ask him, *Whether a diligent holy life, be not much Better then any other life on earth* ? and if he do not say as I say here, and as Christ saith in my Text, that [*the godly choose the better part*] or else I prove him not a very fool before thy face, I will give thee leave to brand my understanding in thy esteem, with the notes of infamy and contempt.

Yea more then so, I will allow thee to go to one that *differs from me in the way of his Religion* : Ask an *Anabaptist*, if they think him more impartial, whether *A Holy and Heavenly but und life be not the best* ? and try whether he will not say as I do. Ask those that you call *Episcopal*, or *Presbyterian*, or *Independents*, or *Separatists* : Ask an *Arminian*, or one of the *contrary mind* : Yea ask a *Papist*, and see whether he will not say as I do. It is true, they are every one of them of minds somewhat different about *some points in the order and manner of their seeking God*. But all of them, that are but sober men, will confess as with *One mouth, that God should be loved above all, and sought and served above all*, and that all should live a *Holy, Diligent, Heavenly life*.

2. But yet if all this will not satisfie you, I will come yet further : Who is it that you would have to be *Judge or Witness in this* ?

case? Is it thy malignant, or worldly, or draken, and ungodly friend? I am contented that the case be referred even to him, and to as many of them as thou wilt, upon condition that he will but first Try the way that he is to judge of. Let him but make an unfringed tryal of a life of *Holy Faith*, and *Love*, and *Obedience*, and *Self-denial*, as long as I have done, and we will receive his Testimony: Nay more, let him thus try a life of *Holiness*, (inwardly and outwardly) but one year, yea or but one moneth, or day, or hour, and we will take his Testimony: But to be judged by a man in a matter of salvation, that speaks of what he never knew nor tryed one hour, but speaks against he knows not what, this is a motion too bad to be made to a very Bedlam.

6. If yet you are not resolved which is the *Better part* and *way*, to whom do you desire to referr it? Shall *Heathens*, *Jews*, and *Infidels* be Judges? Why if they be, they will give the cause against you. *Jews* and most of the *Heathen* world do profess to believe a *life to come*, where some are happy and some are miserable; and they commonly profess that all men should obey their Maker, and make it their chiefest care and labour in this life, to be happy in the next: *Heathens* will confess this. And yet I suppose you will easily confess that these men are none of the fittest Judges. The way to Life by *Jesus Christ* they do not understand: But that the *world is vanity*, and nothing to be preferred before our *happiness* in the world to come, this they will commonly acknowledge. And if the *lives* of the most of them contradict this profession, yet still they are forced to confess the truth: and truth is not theless truth, because they that confess it will not obey it. Nay what greater testimony can you wish to silence your unbelieving thoughts, then the witnesses of the *enemies of the truth*, who as they condemn themselves by bearing witness to that which they refuse to practise, so shall their witness aggravate your condemnation, if you will live below it. What are you *Christians*? and yet refuse to come up in your choice and lives to the doctrine of *Heathens* and *Infidels*?

7. I know you will think at least that *those Heretics* that are daily here hawling against us, will not be partial on our side: If you think that this *Doctrine* is contrived by us for any ends and interests of our own, hearken then to our enemies. These railing *Quakers* that can scarce tell how to speak a word of the Ministers

sp^{er}ity of this world ! I now find what I lost by my continuing in sin so long : but then I knew it not. O friend, as you love your soul, take warning by me, and make use of my experience, and g^o up your self to God betimes !] This, or to this purpose, would the answer of an experienced perlon be, if you should ask him, Which is the bitter way ?

But if you say, that thus we would be our selves the Judges, and bring the matter into our own hands, I answer you, 1. It is true, we would be our selves your Helpers, and do the best we could for your salvation : And if you will neither help your selves, nor give us leave to help you, take what you get by it ; we have done our part.

But, 2. I will not yet so part with you. I will further make you this reasonable offer. I demand of thee, whoever thou art that Readest these words, Whether thou know of any man on earth that thou thinkest to be a wiser man then thy self ? If not, thou art so like the Devil in Pride, that no wonder if thou be near him in malignity and misery. If thou do know of any wiser then thy self, go with me, or with some faithful Minister to that man, and ask him, Whether a diligent holy life, be not much Better then any other life on earth ? and if he do not say as I say here, and as Christ saith in my Text, that [the godly choose the better part] or else I prove him not a very fool before thy face, I will give thee leave to brand my understanding in thy esteem, with the notes of infamy and contempt.

Yea more then so, I will allow thee to go to one that differeth from me in the way of his Religion : Ask an Anabaptist, if thou think him more impartial, whether A Holy and Heavenly bin^d and life be not the best ? and try whether he will not say as I do. Ask those that you call Episcopal, or Presbyterian, or Independents, or Separatists : Ask an Arminian, or one of the contrary mind : Yea ask a Papist, and see whether he will not say as I do ? It is true, they are every one of them of minds somewhat different about some points in the order and manner of their seeking God. But all of them, that are but sober men, will confess as with One mouth, that God should be loved above all, and sought and served above all, and that all should live a Holy, Diligent, Heavenly life.

2. But yet if all this will not satisfie you, I will come yet higher : Who is it that you would have to be Judge or Witness in the

case? Is it thy malignant, or worldly, or drunken, and ungodly friend? I am contented that the case be referred even to him, and to as many of them as thou wilt, upon condition that he will but first Try the way that he is to judge of. Let him but make an unfeigned tryal of a life of *Holy Faith*, and *Love*, and *Obedience*, and *Self-denial*, as long as I have done, and we will receive his Testimony: Nay more, let him thus try a life of *Holiness*, (inwardly and outwardly) but one year, yea or but one moneth, or day, or hour, and we will take his Testimony: But to be judged by a man in a matter of salvation, that speaks of what he never knew nor tryed one hour, but speaks against he knows not what, this is a motion too bad to be made to a very Bedlam.

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sters of Christ, but what is the spawn of venomous, fiery, bitter malice, do for all this cry up *Holiness of life*. Though they corrupt the doctrine of Christ so odiously, and speak like Heathens in many of their extasies and writings, yet do they openly cry down your sensual worldly wayes. Do you not hear how they rail at us for your sakes that are vicious and ungodly, and tell us that *you are the fruit and shame of our Ministry*? Though these words be the *fruit and shame of their malicious Heresie* (for all the world may know that it is our daily work to procure your Conversion, and that you keep your sins, and refuse a holy heavenly life, in despight of us) yet I must tell you, that these wretches shall condemn you. The streets and Congregations have heard them cry out against your ungodly lives: and yet you will not turn to God. Must good and bad, must Ministers and raging Hereticks give in their testimony against you, and yet will you not be satisfied and come in?

8. If yet you know not the *better part*, to whom will you appeal? Will you go to the *Magnitude* and put it to the vote, not only among Christians, but throughout the world? Truly there is no great reason for this, when most men are so blind and wicked: but yet if you should, they would go against you, twenty, if not an hundred to One. I know well enough that when it comes to *practice*, they will not *live a holy Life*, and shew thereby a root of bitterness: But if you ask them what their *judgement* is, *Whether God or the world*, *whether Heaven or earth*, *whether Holiness or sin be best and to be chosen*, most men are against you, and would give it you as their *judgement* under their hands, that *God and everlasting life should be first sought*: Though by this *Confession* they *condemn themselves*, yet is it their *Confession*. As I told you before, the *Jews* are for this doctrine; the *Turks* and other Mahometans are for it; most of the *Heathen world* is for it, doctrinally, though they will not *practice* it: Only there are three sorts against it in the world, that ever I heard of. One sort are the *Cannibals* that eat mens flesh, and go naked, and live like beasts, and never heard of another life; and some such savages as they. Another sort is a few of the *Heathen Philosophers* and their followers, that differ in this from all the rest. A third sort is here and there a *debauched apostate*, that by the righteous judgement of God are so far forsaken by his Grace, for their pride and falsehood against the truth, that they have lost all

lie of a Life to come, and live under the visible plagues of God upon their souls, as men that have sinned wilfully against the truth, and have no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgement and fire that shall devour the adversary, Heb. 6. 6, 7. & 10. 26. and are near the state of the Devils themselves, that are reserved in the chains of spiritual darkness to the judgement of the great day, Jude 6. Job 21. 30. And will you take the judgement of here and there a forlorn wretch, a deplorable apostate, an Epicure, or a Countrey of inhumane Cannibals, before the judgement of the most wise and godly, and of almost all the world? What excellency hath the understanding of these singular men, that it should be so valued above all others? You know partly in this place, who they be that are of this Opinion: And is their Number, or Wisdom, or Conversation such as should move you to be of their Opinion? Shall half a dozen desperate apostates of ungodly lives, seem wiser to you then all the world? And yet I am perswaded that if you go to any even of these few apostates, whatever they think, they will confess that a *Holy life is best*: And yet have you not witness enough against you?

9. Who then shall be the Judge? Shall we appeal to the very *Things themselves*, and to the daily *experience* of the world? You see that worldlings labour for the wind. You see that all their care and pains will not avoid the stroak of death, that turneth the proudest flesh into a clod, and maketh dirt of the greatest Prince. You see that wealth and honour do but mock men, and leave them in the grave, to darkness and corruption. And when you are sure that this will be the upshot of all your fleshy pleasure and worldly gains, are you not satisfied past all doubt, that the smallest hopes or possibility of another life should be sought with far more care then this?

10. If none of these witnesses be regarded by thee, I know not whom to appeal to, but *thy self!* And wilt thou needs *thy self* decide the case? Hast thou knowledge and experience, honesty, and impartiality enough to fit thee to be judge: If thou hadst, thou wouldest make no doubt of it, but have been resolved for Heaven and Holiness ere this. Thy *unresolvedness* proves thee blind and partial, and very much forsaken by the spirit of light: And should such a one be judge? But go to, I will much

referre thy case to thy self (reserving still the final judgement to the Lord) upon these just and resonabl conditions.

1. Wilt thou first thy self but use those necessary means for knowledge, in Reading, Fasting, Praying, Watching, Meditation, Conference with the wise, and such like, as all those do that come to ripe and saving Knowledge? If I referr my health to thee as my Physician, thou must not refuse to try my pulse, and see my urine, and use the means to find out the disease. Wouldst thou be my Lawyer, and refuse to read my Evidences, and study my case? And wilt thou needs be judge thy self of the matters of thine own felicity or misery, and yet refuse to read and hear and pray and meditate, and use the necessary means of understanding? Wilt thou lie in bed and work out thy salvation? Wilt thou make use of no ones eyes but thy own, and yet wilt thou wink or draw the Curtains, or shut the windows, and cast away thy spectacles, and neither come into the sunshine, nor use a candle? This is but to say, I will willfully condemn my soul, and none shall hinder me.

2. But yet another condition I must propose. If thou wilt but (as I said before of others) a while make *Tryal* of a holy life, and try in thy self what *Faith*, and *Hope*, and *Charity* are, and try what *selfdenyal* is, I will then referr the matter to thy self. Go back from God if thou find any Reason for it: and turn from Christ and Heaven and Holiness if thou do not like them. But if thou wilt needs be the judge, and wilt not be perswaded to *try the thing*, thou art a partial self-deceiving judge.

3. But if this much cannot be obtained, at least be Considerate in thy judging. If thou wilt but take thy self aside from the noise of worldly vanities and deceits, and commune seriously with thy heart, and bethink thee as before the Lord, and as one that knows he must shortly dye, Whether Heaven or Earth should be sought most carefully, and Whether God or thy flesh should be served most resovedly and diligently; and if thou wilt but dwell so long upon these manlike thoughts till they are digested, and Truth have time to shew its face, I dare then leave the question to thy self. The next time that the Sermon or any affliction comes near thee and awakeneth thy Conscience, do but withdraw thy self into secret, and soberly bethink thee of the matter, what *hopes* thou hast from the *world*, and what thou *must have* from *God*: what *Time* is, and what *Eternity* is; and then be

Conscience leave to speak, and then I will venture the issue upon thy Conscience: For thee I mean, though I must stick to a better judge my self. Doth not Conscience sometime tell thee, that the Holiest persons are the wiser, and that thy labour is liker at last to be lost and repented of, than theirs? Doth not Conscience sometime make thee wish that thou wert but in as safe a case as they: and that thou mightest but die the death of the Righteous, and that thy last end might be as theirs?

4. But if all this will not serve the turn, thou shalt be Judge thy self: but it shall be when thou art *more capable* of judging. If God by Grace shall Change thy heart, I will stand to thy Judgement: If he do not, when thy graceless guilty soul shall pass out of thy pampered dirty flesh, and appear before the dreadful God, I will then leave the case to thy Conscience to judge of. To all *Eternity* it shall be *partly left* to the judgement of thy Conscience, whether *sin* or *Holiness* be better? and whether *Saints* or *careless sinners* were the wiser? and whether it had not been better for thee to have spent that life in preparing for thy Endless life, which thou spentst in slighting it, and caring for the world and flesh. Then thou shalt be Judge thy self of these matters: but *under a more severe and righteous judge*: And so as shall make thy tearing heart to wish with many a thousand groans, that thou hadst judged wiser in time.

But because that Judgement will be to desperation, and too late for hope or any help, let Conscience speak when thou lyest sick, and seest that thou art a dying man! Then judge thy self whether a Holy or a worldly life be better? and whether it had not been thy wiser course to have sowed to the spirit, that so thou maist reap everlasting life, then to have sowed to the flesh, from which thou now lookst to reap no better then corruption. Be not deceived: God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap, *Gal.6.6,7.*

But because it will be very late to stay till thy own Death draw so neer thee, go but to thy *neighbours* that lie in sickness, looking for the stroak of death; Yea to thy companions in sin and folly, and ask them then which way is better? Ask them then which is the better part? Whether now they had rather be the Holiest Saints, or such as they have been? Whether now they had not rather they had spent their time in the most careful seeking for everlasting life, then in doing as they have done? Say to thy old companion

companion now, ["Brother, I see you are near your end ! the mortal stroak of death is coming ! you are now leaving all the pleasures of this world : I pray you tell me now your Judgement, whethet mirth, and sport, and feasting, and drinking, and wealth, and honour be more to be sought then life eternal ? and whether Hearing and Reading the word of God, and Praying, and meditating, and flying from sin, be as bad or as needless a thing as we have formerly taken it to be ? Had you rather appear before the Lord in the case of those that we derided as Puritans and too precise for making such a doe about salvation, or in the case that you and I have lived in ?] Ask but this Question to thy old companions, and try whether the Consciences of almost all that approach their end, do not bear witness against ungodliness, and do not justifie the holy diligence of the Saints. It is but two days since a poor drunkard of a neighbour Parish, being ready to pass out of this world, did send hither (and to other Parishes) in the terrors of his soul, to desire our Congregations to take warning by him, and to strive with God if possible, for some mercy for his soul, that was passing in terrors into another world, because of the guilt of his odious sin.]

Well first, I have gone along with you to all the creatures in this world, that have any fitness to judge in this case : and if all these will not serve, we must go to another world for Judgement, or stay till you come there.

11. And really do you think if we could speak with *Angels* or *departed Souls*, that they would not consent with God and all Believers in their Testimony ? O how they would rebuke their madness, that make any doubt of so great, so plain, so sure a truth, as this of the necessity and the excellency of a Holy life. None are so fully resolved of this question as they that have tasted the End of both, and past the righteous judgement of the Lord. They that are feeling the anguish of their Consciences, and the tormenting displeasure of Almighty God, are satisfied by this time : whether the Godly or ungodly were the Wiser men, and whether sanctity or sensuality were the *Bona* course ? They that are rejoicing with Christ in Glory, are satisfied perfectly of this question, and are far from repenting of their choice. *Luk. 16.* Christ tells you enough, in the case of the Rich man and *Lazarus*, how men judge in the life to come.

12. But if all these witnesses will not serve you, what shall we say to you? Whom will you choose to be your Counsellor? There is none left that I remember, unless you will go the Devil for advice. But against this I have told you enough before. Will he speak for Holiness that is a spirit of uncleanness; and will he shew thee Heaven that laboureth purposely to hide it from thee, till thou have lost it? Or will he let thee see the odiousness and danger of thy sin, when it is the snare and bait by which he hopeth to undo thee? But yet for all this, let me tell thee, that thou mayst learn even from the Tempting Enemy himself, the Truth of that which I am now asserting. For as the Devil himself believeth it, when he persuadeth thee not to believe it; so the very nature and manner of his Temptations, may help thee to perceive that Heaven is attainable, and Holiness is the only way. Would he make so much ado about it, to keep thee from the believing it, and seeking it, if there were not a Heaven for thee to find? why is he so eager to draw thee unto sin, if sin be not hurtful to thee? Dost thou not feel the importunity of his Temptations? Its easie to observe them. Why is he so much much against a Holy doctrine, and a Holy life, and a Holy people, if it were not that he knows the Necessity and worth of Holiness for thy good? The actions of a Knowing Enemy, may do very much to acquaint us with the truth. Besides this, he hath oft appeared in bodily shapes (as I am able to prove by undeniable evidence;) sometime to entice men to sin, and sometime to be Gods executioner to afflict them for it, and sometime to make a Covenant with witches and Conjurers for their souls, as many a hundred of them have confessed at their death. And why should he be so desirous of thy soul, if thou hadst none to lose? or so desirous to deceive thee, and deprive thee of salvation, if there were none for thee to lose? and if this were not the chief concernment of thy soul, why should thy chief enemy so much regard it? Thou seest that he is not so careful to deprive thee of thy fleshly pleasure: He careth not how much thou hast of this: The more the glutton is pleased with his cheer, and the more the drunkard delighteth in his cups, and the more the fornicator is pleased in his filthiness, and every voluptuous person in his voluptuousness, the Devil is pleased so much the more. He cares not if thou have all the Kingdoms of the world, if he can deprive thee of the Everlasting Kingdom: Nor will he grudge thee the glory and honour of

the world, if he can but keep thee from the heavenly Glory. He will allow thee the Hypocrites Reward, which is the applause of men, if he can but keep thee from the Saints Reward, which is the favour of God. He cares not how much of thy Good things thou hast here, if he can deprive thee of the Everlasting Good. It is his desire that thou have thy *Portion in this life*, that thou mayst miss of the *Believers Portion* in the next. Certainly the Devil himself by his Temptations, Apparitions, and Contracts, doth plainly tell us of a life to come, and what it is that conduceth most to our Good or Hurt, our Joy or Torment; and consequently teacheth us what to choose, by tempting us so palpably and eagerly to refuse it.

You see now what a Jury of Witnesses I have brought in, to testify which is the *Better part*: The Devil and the wicked are added to the rest, because you will hear no better witness. If you will, here are now whose testimonies are unquestionable.

But when all is done, it is the Lord that is and will be *Judge*. All these are but *witnesses* to dispose thee to receive his sentence. Thou art no *Believer*, till the Authority of the Word of God, will serve to satisfie and resolve thee.

CHAP. III.

Full proof (in twentie Queries) from Reason it self that there is a Life to come, and Holiness is the way to it; and the Better Part: And that the Gospel is the certain Word of God (in fifteen Queries more) with Answers to the Infidels Objections.

And by this time I come somewhat nearer to the Infidel, and am ready to answer his fore-going Question, [Where shall I find the *Judgement* or *Testimony* of the Lord?] O, saith the Unbeliever, if I were but sure that there were a life hereafter, where the godly and the wicked shall be differently Rewarded, as the Scripture speaks, then I must confess he were no better than a ~~mad~~ man that would prefer this world, or wilfully live in sin, and not seek Heaven with all his might, and be as earnest in His

the strictest Saint ! But I am not sure that this is true, and that there is any such difference after death, to be expected.

Answ. Alas poor wretch ! Are thou at that pass ! Hast thou so far lost the Knowledge of God, and of thy self, and of thy end and business here, and of the word and works of God, as to turn worse then Jew, or Turk, or Heathen, even to think thy self a beast, that hath no life nor happiness but this ? If this be thy case, I cannot now stand to deal with thee according to thy necessity. I am now dealing with them that confess a Life hereafter : And because we cannot in all our writings repeat over the same things, I desire thee to peruse what I have already written for such as thee, in the Second Part of *The Saincts Rest*, and in a Treatise called *The unreasonableness of Infidelity* ; and at present take only some brief advertisements for thy conviction.

1. And first, whereas you say you are not sure of a Life hereafter, I demand of you, Whether you are sure that there is no such life ? I am sure you are not. If you think you are, (which none but a debauched man can think, that hath put out the eye of Natural Light) let us hear your Proof, and you shall soon be told the vanity of it. But if you are not sure that there is no such life, then I would know of you, Whether a Possibility of such Everlasting things deserve not greater care and diligence then is used by the Holiest Saint on earth ? You say, You are not sure that there is a Heaven for Saints. But what if it prove true, (as nothing more true) will you sit still, and lose it for you know not what ? Or for want of a little care in seeking it ? You say, You know not whether there be a Hell for ungodly men, or no : But what if it prove true (as certainly it will) where are you then ? Will you venture your selves upon the Possibility of such an Endless Loss and Torment, which now you might on reasonable terms escape ? You will confess that a Possibility of a Kingdom should be more regarded, then a Certainty of a pin or a feather : And a Possibility of some Tormenting disease but for twenty years, should more carefully be avoided then the Certain stinging of a Nettle.

Quer. 2. You say, You are not sure that there is a life to come ? But are you sure to continue the life you have ? Or is it any great matter that you are called to lose, for the obtaining of that which you are not sure of ? You know the contrary, we easily may do, to make sure that you have not long to live here. Nothing more

sure then that you will shortly die. And you are not sure but it may be to morrow. And while you are here, it is nothing worth the naming (but what hath reference to another life) that you do possess. What have you to your flesh, but meat, and drink, and sleep, and lust, and such kind of beastial delights ! Which is better be *without*, then *have*, if we could also be without the need of them. Can you call these by the name of *Happiness*, without renouncing your Reason and Experience ? You say, *You know not what God will do for you hereafter* : But you know what sin and the world will do for you here : Even Nothing but hold you in a transitory dream, and then dismiss you into rotteness and dust. If you were not certain of another life, as long as you are most certain of the vanity of this, doth not Reason tell you, that a *Possible Everlasting Glory*, should be preferred before a *Certain vanity* ? If you were not *sure* to get any thing by God and a Holy Life, yet as long as you are *sure*, even as *sure* as you live, that you can *lose nothing* by it, that is worth the talking of, is not the case then resolved, which way is the *Better* ? If you say, *you shall lose your fleshy pleasures*; I answer, *They are not worth the having*. The pleasure doth not counter-vail the trouble : no more then the delight of scratching (as I said before) doth counter-vail the trouble of the itch. Moderation and temperance is sweeter then excess. If *too much be better* then enough, and that which *hurteth nature* better then that which *helpeth it*, then *self-destroying* and fighting against your bodily welfare, would be *best*. Is not a temperate meal more pleasant then a gluttonous surfe, that is worse to the *feeling* of the glutton the next day ? Is not common food that coideth not much, and kindleth no troublesom itch in a mans appetite, more pleasant then enticing costly dainties ? Is not so much drink as nature requireth, much better then that which makes the stomach sick, the brain witless, if not the purse pennyless, and breedeth many noysom diseases to the flesh, and hasteneth death, that hasteth of it self ? By that time the gawdy apparel, the dainty fare, and drink is paid for ; and by that time the flesh hath suffered all that pain and sicknes that are the ordinary followers of excess, me thinks you should say, that if there were no Hell, your sin were a punishment it self, and that *in this life* it bringeth more pain then pleasure, and that such kind of pleasure is not worth the keeping, to the hazard of the least possibility of

Everlasting life. Wouldst thou under thy hand and seal give away thy hopes and possibility of everlasting life, and run the hazard of an everlasting Torment, for the Pleasures of sin, or to avoid the trouble of a Holy life? Why then thou maist as well even sell it all for pins, or points, or childrens rackets. Then thou art as foolish as the worst of Witches, that sell their souls to a lying spirit, that, whatever he doth promise them, doth pay them with nothing but calamity and deceit. When thou comest to know better what it is that the world can do for thee, thou wilt then confess there was nothing in it, that should not have been slighted for the *smaller* hopes of an Everlasting life. Dost thou think the world will be much better to thee, for the time to come, than hitherto it hath proved? Deceive not thy self; it will prove the same: yea and worst at last. Look back now upon all the pleasures of thy life, from thy infancy to this day, and tell me what the better thou art for them. If *this* were the hour of thy death, would all the profits or pleasures of thy life, be any comfort to thee, or make thy death a whit the easier? Have the dust or bones of the Carkasses of Voluptuous sinners, any comfort or benefit now, by all the pleasure of their former sin? Surely I need not all these words to a man of common understanding, to convince him that if Heaven were as uncertain as the Infidel doth imagine, a man of Reason should venture all that he hath upon the meer Possibility; because his *All* indeed is *Nothing*, and he is *sure* he can be no *loser* by the bargain: it being not so much as the venture of a pin for the Possibility of a Crown.

Quer. 3. But that's not all. What if I shall prove to thee palt all denial, that even in *this life*, Holiness is far the most delightful, gainful, honourable life, and that the ungodly live in a continual misery? Will not *this* serve turn to convince thee that a Holy life, should be undertaken for a meer Possibility of Heaven, if we had no more? Read but the Proofs of this anon, and if I make it not good to thee, call me a deceiver. But if I prove that Holiness is the *sweetest life on Earth*, and Heaven the *sure Reward* hereafter; and that sin is a *misery* *itself* to the sinner, and *He* the certain punishment hereafter, then see that thou confess that God is a good Master, and the Devil a bad one; for as hit thou shalt be forced to confess it.

Quer. 4. Well? You lay *Treasure* not *sure* that there is any

ther life for man. But have you used the Means to make it sure to you, and to be well-resolved? If you have, then you have impartially searched, and prayed, and meditated on the Word of God, and heard what can be said by Wiser men, for that which you say you are not sure of; but if you have trusted to your own understanding, and neglected Meditation, Prayer, Enquiry, and other needful means, what wonder then if you be uncertain, Even whether there be a Heaven or Hell? Its no disgrace to Physick, or Astronomy, or Musick, or Languages, or Navigation, but to you, if you say that you are uncertain of all their conclusions, when you never studied them, or at least never studied them with that diligence and patience as those must do that will attain a certain satisfying knowledge.

Quer. 5. Moreover, if you are so uncertain of a Life to come, I would ask you, Whether in all your search and study, you have behaved your selves as Learners, or rather as proud self-conceited men, that think themselves wise enough before they learn, to try and judge their Books and Teachers. If this be your case, no wonder if you be Infidels. If you come with such a disposition to read a Book of Astronomy or Physick, you will never learn. If you go to any Schoolmaster, or to learn any language or science, and think your selves able before you have learnt them, to try and judge your Teacher and all the Books you read, and so will reject all that you do not understand, or agreeeth not with you former conceits, you will sooner prove doting fools then Scholars, and sooner be the derision of Rational men, then come to the knowledge which you pretend to seek. Come to Christs School as little children in meekness and humility and a willingness to be taught, and patiently continue in the use of means till Learning can be attained, before you think your selves fit to censure the Truth of God which you are learning, and then tell me whether God doth not resolve you.

Quer. 6. Moreover, I would know of you that doubt soof the life to come, Whether you have been true to so much Light as you received, and have lived in obedience to the Truth which God revealed to you. Or rather whether you have not wilfully and knowingly lived in some secret or open sin, and striven against the Light and Spirit of Christ, and abused the truth which you have known; and used violence with your own consciences. If so (which its ten to one is your case) it is no wonder

are Infidels, forsaken of God whom you first forsook, and given up to Pride and Self-deceit.

Quer. 7. If Man have no Life to live but this, and no further End of his Actions then a Beast, nor any further account to give, then he is indeed but one of the higher sort of Beasts, differing but gradually from a Dog, as a Dog doth from a Swine. And if this be indeed thy judgement of thy self, I demand, Whether or no thou be content to be used as a Beast? Wilt thou not take it ill to be called or judged a Beast by another? Or wouldst thou have others judge better of thee then thy self? Wouldst thou have no man regard thy Propriety, or Life any more then a Beast is to be regarded? A Beast hath no Propriety, no not of that which Nature hath given him. You accuse not your selves of doing him any wrong, when you deprive the sheep of his fleece, nor when you make a constant drudge of your Horse or Ox. And do you think it lawful before God, for any one that can but master you, to do the like by you? to strip you naked, and to make pack-horses of you, and use you as their slaves? We take it to be no sin to take away the lives of Beasts, if it be but for our own commodity: We kill Oxen, and calves, and sheep, and swine, and fowle and fishes for our daily food. And is it lawful before God for others to do so by you? Should nothing restrain them but want of Power to overcome you? If you say that you are Beasts, as Beasts you should be used.

Quer. 8. Moreover I would know of you, Whether you think that there is any other world, which spiritual inhabitants do possess? If you say, No, you go against all Reason and experience. Against Experience: because that many a hundred Witches, and many Apparitions and haunted houses have put the matter out of question (for all that many reports of such things have been false.) And against all Reason; because we see that this inferiour world is everywhere replenished with inhabitants: The earth hath men and beasts, the aire hath birds, the water hath fishes; And can a man of common Reason then think that the superiour Regions which we see and which we see not (which for greatness and for splendor and excellency are a thousand fold above this earth) should all be uninhabited and desitute! and that there are not creatures also there for excellency and Number incomparably beyond the inhabitants of this lesser lower world? Certainly nothing is made in vain, nor are the works of God so monstrously

disproportioned and discomposed, as for the *Nobler* parts to be only for the *baser*. The Heavens that are over us, and all the vast and most excellent parts of the Creation, have a use that is answerable to their excellency. God makes not cottages to be inhabited, and Pallaces and Cities to lie waste and desert to no use.

But if you grant there is another world proportionaby thus replenished with creatures, you may easily see from thence a *Probability*, that man shall be translated thither. Why not the soul of man, as well as those spirits that in *assumed shapes* have made their *appearances* unto man? As all things ripen to their perfection, why should it seem any more improbable that the soul shall pass hence into the world of spirits, then that the chicken shall come out of the shell, and the infant out of the wombe, into so wide and light a world as this, when before they were shut up in a narrow darkness, and never heard nor knew any thing of that world, which they enter into?

Quer. 9. Do you know why it is that God hath given man the knowledge, and free-will, and capacity to seek another life, which beasts have not, if he be intended for no other life then beasts? If God be no *most Wise*, he is not *God*. If he be, then he maketh not so excellent faculties as these in vain, but fitteth all his Creatures to their *uses*. Every *workman* will do so by his *work*. Why is a *knife* made keen, but to *cut* with? And what are the *wheels* of your *watch* or *clock* made for, but to *shew* you the *hour* of the *day*? Look now into the *whole frame* of the soul of man, and judge by its *aptitude* what it is made for.

1. *Man* is capable of *Knowing* that there is a *God*, and knowing his *Attributes*, which *Beasts* are not; because they be not made to *enjoy* him.

2. *Man* is capable of *knowing* his *Relation* to this *God*, that he is our *Creator*, and we his *Creatures*; he our *Lord* and we his *Own*; he our *Ruler*, and we he *Subjects*; he our *Benefactor*, and we his *Beneficiaries*: And we are capable of *Knowing* our *Duty* in these several *Relations*. And certainly all this is not in Vain.

3. *Man* is capable of *Knowing* that the *Everlasting Love* of *God* is that alone that can make him *Happy*: And why would *God* shew him this, if he were not capable of *enjoying* it? *Person* tells men that *nothing here* can make us *Happy*, and that *we* can do it.

4. Man is capable of *Knowing* that certain *Duties* are to be performed in order to the *Pleasing* of his *Lord*, and what those *Duties* are: which would not be, if we were not capable of pleasing him, and so of being happy in him.

5. Man is made capable of *Desiring* after the *Everlasting Love* of *God*; and that above all things in this world. And *God* hath not made such *Desires* in vain.

6. Man is capable of *Loving God* as an *Object* Everlastingly to be enjoyed, and that above all other things.

7. Man also is capable of referring all the *creatures unto* *God*, and *using* all things but as *Means* to this *Everlasting end*. Thus do believers, And surely all this is not in vain.

8. Man is a *Creature* that *cannot regularly* be moved according to his *nature*, to the performance of his *Duty* to *God* and *Man*, unless it be by *Motives* fetcht from the *life to come*. Take off that poise, and all his *orderly motion* will soon cease. Nothing below such *Everlasting things* are fit or sufficient *Morally* to govern him, and cause him to live as man should live:

9. He is possessed of *actual fears* of *Everlasting Punishment*, and shall never perfectly overcome these fears by his greatest *Unbelief*.

10. He is capable of fetching his highest *Pleasures* from the *fore-thoughts* of *Everlasting Happiness*, and receiving from hence his encouragement in well doing and forecast of the *Reward*. Now this being the *Natural frame* of man, as is past denial (when *Brutes* have no such thing at all,) let *Reason* judge whether the *God of Nature* have made this nature of man in vain that we seethat suited every other creature to its use: our horses to carry us, and our *Ox* to draw for us, and the earth to bear its several fruits for them and us: And hath he mistaken only in the making of *man*, and gone beyond his *own Intention*, and fitted him for those uses and enjoyments that he was never meant for? These are not *Imputations* to be cast upon the most wise and gracious *God*.

Quer. 10. Moreover I demand of you, *What is the End of man and all these special faculties, if there be no life for him after this?* Either he hath an *End* which he is to intend, or he hath *none*. If *none*, then he hath *nothing to do* in the world. For all actions of man are *nothing else* but the *Intending* of *some End*.

and the choise and use of means for the attaining it. Man must lie down and sleep out his days, if this be true that he hath ~~an~~ end. Nay sleep it self hath some. And he cannot choose but Intend some End and seek it, if he would never so fain, unless he will take some opiate stupifying potion, or run mad. And he that made him also and placed him here, had some End in it: For if man had thus no End, he could have no Maker or Efficient cause: For every Rational efficient intendeth an end in all his works. (And he that made men Rational, is Eminently much more Knowing then his Creature) And if we had no Maker, then we have no Being, and so are no Men.

But if *Man* unquestionably have an End, it is either something that is *Nobler* or *Baser* then himself, and some state that is *Better* or *Worse* then that in which he seeks his end. *Baser* it cannot be: for that were *Monstrous*, that *Baser* things should be the End of the more *Noble*. *Beasts* are made for *Man*, and therefore not *Man* for *Beasts*. The *Earth* is made for *Beasts* and *Men*, and therefore we are not made for the *Earth*. Our *Means* is not our *End*. If you grant that we are made for *God* that made us (as nothing more sure) then How is it that *God* can be our *End* if there be no *life* but this? 1. Here we are but in seeking him, and still are forced to complain that we fall short. Here we are but in the use of means. 2. We find that our Knowledge, Desires, and Love, will here reach no higher then to carry us on towards that perfection that is in our eye, and not to satisfie the soul. The creature that doth attain his *End*, hath *Rest* in it, and is *better* then before. But we have nothing here like *Rest*, and should be in a *worse* condition hereafter, if we had no more. 3. Here we sin against the Lord, and wrong him more then we serve him: we know but little of him and his work; and serve and praise him but a little, and not according to the capacity of our nature. And therefore if he have not a higher end for us, and we a higher end to seek then any is in this world to be found, our Natures seem to be in vain. For my part, though it be in weakness, I must needs say it is my trade, and daily work to serve my *God*, and seek after an immortal blessedness: And if I thought that there were no such thing to be had, and no such use for me, I must needs stand still, and look above me, or in my practice unman my self by a brutish life, as I have brutified my self in my estimation and intention. For what com-

I find to do in the world ! What should I do with my Reason and Knowledge, or any faculty above a beast, if I had no higher a work and end then *beasts* ? Verily, if I had lost the *Hopes* of another life, I knew not what to do with my self in the world ! but must become some other creature, and live some other kind of life, then now I live.

Quer. 11. Moreover, I desire you to consider, Whether it were credible to a man of Reason, that God made his noblest creature in this world with a Nature that should be a Necessary Misery and Vexation to it self above all the misery of the baser creatures ? and that the wiser any man is, the more miserable he must needs be ?

This is not credible. Yet thus would it be, if there were no life but this. For 1. the Knowledge that man hath of a *superiour Good* (which beasts have not) would *Tantalize* him and torment him : To *know it*, and must not *partake* of it, is to be used as a Horse that is tyed near his Provender, which he must not reach.

2. The *Love*, and *Desires*, and *Hopes*, that I before described, would all be our *Vexation*. To *Love* and *Desire* that which we cannot attain, and that with the chief of our *Affections*, is but to make us miserable by *virtue*.

3. To use all those *Means*, and do the *Duties* before-mentioned in vain, when we are not capable of the *End*, is but to roll at *Sisiphus* stone, and to be made to wash *Blackamores*, or to fill a bottomless tub ?

4. No creature here but man, hath *Fear* of any misery after death, and therefore none would be here so miserable. There is no Infidel but must confess, that for ought he knows there may be a life of punishment for the wicked. And this [may be] will breed more fears in a considerate man, then Death it self alone could do.

5. Or if there were no *Fear* of that, yet Man hath *Reason* to think before-hand of his *Death*, and to think of his abode in *Darkness*, which *Beasts* have not. To think of being turned to a stinking carrion, and to a clod, and so continuing for ever, without any Hope of a Resurrection, would be matter for continual horrour to a considering man, which *Brutes* are not molested with. And wise men that can fore-see, would be tormented more then fools. All this is incredible, that God should make his noblest creature to be *Naturally* most miserable ; and give him *Knowledge* and

and *Affections*, and set a *Certain Death*, and *Possible Torment* continually before his eyes, to *Torment him*, without *any Remedy*: And besides the *Hoped Life* hereafter, there is none.

Quer. 12. Do you think that the *Belief* of another life, is *needful* or *useful*, to the *well governing* of this world, or not? If you say no, 1. Why then do *Infidels* and *Brutiffs* say, that *Religion* is *but the device of men for the Governing of the world*? and that without it *Subjects* would not be *Ruled*? You confess by this your *frivilous objection*, that the world cannot be *Ruled well* without the *Belief* of a *life to come*.

2. And it is most manifest from the very *nature of man*, and from the *common experience* of the world. 1. If man be *well-governed*, it must be either by *Laws containing Rewards and penalties*, or *without*. Not *without*. For, 1. All the world doth finde by *experience*, that it *cannot be*; and therefore every *Commonwealth* on earth is *Governed by Laws*, either *Written, Customary or Verbal*.

2. If the *Love of Virtue* for it self should prevail with *one of a thousand*, that would be nothing to the *Government* of the world.

3. Nor could any man be effectually induced to love *Virtue* for it self, according to the *doctrine of the Brutiffs*: For *Virtue it self* is made no *Virtue* by them, but a *deformity* of the *mind*, while they overthrow the *End*, and *Objett*, and *Law* that it is measured and informed by (as I shall more fully open to you anon). It is therefore most certain that no *Nation* is or can be *Governed as becometh man*, without *Proposed punishments and Rewards*.

And if so, then these must be either *temporal punishments and benefits*, or such as are to be had in the *Life to come*. That *Temporal punishments and benefits* cannot be *Motives sufficient* for any *tolerable* (much less *perfect* or *sufficient*) *Government*, is a most evident Truth: For 1. *de facto* we see by *experience*, that no *people* live *like men* that be not *Governed by the Belief of another life*. The *Nations* that believe it not, are *Savages* almost all, living naked and bestially, and knowing nothing of *virtue or vice*, but as they feel the *commodity or discommodity* to their *flesh*: They eat the *flesh of men*, for the most part, and live *brutishly* as they believe. And if you say that in *China* it is not so, I answer, one part of them there believe the *Importunity* of

the soul, and most of them take it as probable, and so the Nation hath the Government which it hath, from everlasting Motives.

And if you say that the *antient Romans* had a sufficient Government, I answer, 1. The most of them believed a life to come, and it was but a few that denied the Immortality of the soul: and therefore it was this that Governed the Nations. For those that believed another life, had the Government of the few that did not believe it, or else the Government it self had been more corrupt. 2. And yet the faultiness of their belief appeared in the faultiness of their Government. Every Tyrant took away mens lives at pleasure. Every Citizen that had slaves (which was common) at pleasure killed them, and cast them into the fishponds. The servants secretly poysoned their masters, and that in so great numbers, that *Seneca* saith, *Epist. 4. ad Lucnt.* that the [Number of those that were killed by their servants, through treachery, deceit, or force, was as great, as of them that were killed by Kings]; which was not a few.

2. It is apparent that the world would be a Wilderness, and men like wild and ravenous beasts, if they were not Governed by Motives from the Life to come.

1. Because the Nature of man is so corrupt and vicious, that we see how prone they are to evil, that everlasting Motives themselves are too much uneffectual with the most.

2. Every man naturally is *selfish*, and therefore would measure all Good and Evil with referrence to themselves, as it was commodious and incommodious to them. And so virtue and vice would not be known, much less regarded.

3. By this means there would be as many *Ends*, and *Laws*, or *Rules*, as *Men*; and so the world would be all in a Confusion.

4. If Necessity forced any to combine, it would be but as *Robbers*, and *strength* would be their *Law* and *Justice*; and he that could get hold of another mans estate, would have the best Title.

5. All those that had but *strength* to do mischief, would be under no *Law*, nor have any sufficient Motive to Restrain them. What should restrain the Tyrants of the world, that rule over many Nations of the earth, if they believe no Punishment after death, but that their *Laws* and *Practices* should be as impious and

bestial, as their lusts can tempt them to desire ? What should strain Armies from Rapes and Cruelty, that may do it unpunished ? Or popular tumults that are secured by the multitude.

6. And there would be no restraint of any villany that could but be *secretly* committed. And a wicked wit can easily hide the greatest mischiefs. Poysoning, stabbing, burning houses, defaming, adultery, and abundance the like, are easily kept secret by a man of wit, unless a special Providence reveal them (as usually it doth).

7. At least, the probability of secrecy would be so great, and also the probability of sinful advantage, that most would venture.

8. And all those sins would be committed without scruple, which the *Law of man* did appoint no punishment for : as Lying, and many odious vices.

9. If one man, or two, or ten should be deterred from poisoning you, or burning your houses, or killing your cattle, &c. by humane Laws, a thousand more would be let loose in venture.

10. All the sins of the *heart* would have full Liberty, and a ~~dis~~ filed soul have neither cure nor restraint. For the Laws and judgments of men extend not to the *heart*. All the world then might live in the *Hatred of God*, and of their *neighbours*, and in daily Murder, Theft, Adultery, Blasphemy of the *heart*. Within they might be as bad as *Devils*, and fear no punishment ; for man can take no cognizance of it. And it is the *heart* that is the *Man*. You see then what persons the *Infidels* and *Brutes* would have us all be ! What hearts and lives mankind should have according to their *Laws* ! Be *Devils* within, and murder, and deceit, and commit adultery as much as you will, so you have wit to escape the Gallows, and you are *Scholars* fit for such ~~bad~~ *Matters*.

11. Yea let me add this one more mischief : Hereby they would destroy all *Charity* and *Good works*, except the very basest Love of those that please mens lusts. For no Laws of men command men to the *Love of God or man* : Nor much to *Good works* ! Who would do any thing comparatively, that believed not a *Reward* and *Punishment* hereafter ? If we give all that we have to the poor, we can *here* have no *Reward* ; but the *breath* of a ~~man~~ mouth, which at death we understand not. Take down the ~~Le~~

lasting Ends and Motives, and all good works; and inward virtues too that should produce them, are taken down.

And by this time you may see, what a litter of bears, what a pack of ravening dogs, what Cannibals the world should be turned into, by the doctrine of the *Brutes*, that deny the life to come.

Well! but perhaps you will by this time have so much sense, as to confess that *Threatnings and Punishments, Hopes and Fears of the State of another Life* are necessary to the well governing of this world. And if so, I desire no more, to satisfie any man that believes that there is a God, (and that is any man that hath not drowned his wits in sin.) For 1. This will then shew that the *Nature of man*, is formed for another life: and God did not make him such in vain. 2. And certainly if everlasting Motives must be put into the Laws that govern us, and into our Hopes and Fears, then it is not possible, but such things there are to be expected. For any man to imagine that God would make a world, which he cannot Govern but by falsehood and deceit, this is to say that *God is no God*. For all lying and falsehood comes either from a want of *Power, or Wisdom, or Goodness*, when men either *cannot* make good their words or otherwise attain their ends; or when they have not *wit to know* what is, or was, or will be, or when they are so *bad* as to be disposed to deceive. But he that ascribeth any of these to God, doth worse then to say that there is no God. If I hate deceit and Lying my self, the God that gave me all that little Good which I have, must hate it more. Dream not of any but a worm, or fool, or impious tyrant, that needs or loves deceit and falsehood to attain their ends. Judge by the frame of Heaven and Earth, and by that little Good that is in Good men, whether the living God be one that needs such Hellish Engines to Rule the world.

If therefore in order to the Government of mankind we must needs Believe a *Life to come*, it is certainly True; And why do not you believe that which Government requireth you to believe.

Qur. 13. Moreover I demand of you, Whether you take God indeed to be the Governor of this world, or not? By [Governor] I mean properly, One that Ruleth the Rational Creature as such, by Moral Means, even *Laws and Executions*. Is not his Potential,

Potential, Efficacious operations, but conclude a *Necessity of Moral Government*. I know a self-conceited Popish Infidel hath deavoured to perswade the world, that Gods Sovereignty and Moral Government are Metaphorical expressions, arising from the misconceiveings of weak men ; and that Wiser men like himself do conceive of Gods Government only as of an Artificers disposal of his works, that Physically accomplishleth all his Will. As if Gods *Natural Causations*, and his *Moral* were inconsistent ; Or as if God were not *Wise* and *Good* as well as *Almighty* ; or did not in his *Government of man* demonstrate his *Sapience* in his *Laws*, and his *Goodness* in *Attractive Benefits*, as well as his *Power* in meer *Natural Motion* ! Or as if man were not a Rational Creature, and a free-agent, and were not to be governed according to his Nature, by Objects suited to his Intellect and Will : but must be used and ruled like a stone, or beast. Or as if God could not infallibly attain his Ends by a *Sapiential Government*, and by preserving the liberty of the Will, as well as by a meer *Necessitating causation* ! This man was so enamoured upon his supposed skill in *Physicks* and *Metaphysicks*, that he not only lost his *Morality*, but grew to be such an Enemy to it, as to blot out all true *Morality*, *Civility*, *Policy*, *Oeconomy* at a dash ; and stands with the rest of the Proud fraternity, as a Monument of Gods justice against the Proud, so deplorately forsaken even in the Reason that he glorieth of, that children may perceive his folly. He that is all for Operations of Power, a excluding *Sapiential Government* by *Laws*, and their just executions, doth think sure that a horse hath more of the Image of God then a man : For he is much stronger. Bruitish force would be more excellent then the Attraction of *Goodness* and the *Conduct of Wisdom*, if the *Government* (which is no *Government*) that these men dream of, were the most excellent. As he will allow his *Artificer* to shew as much at least of his wit, by making a *Watch* or *Clock* that shall, though by a necessity, move without the finger of the workman continually moving it, so methinks he should allow the Infinitely Wise and Gracious God, to be nevertheless Wise or Gracious, if he Rule the Rational-free-agent, without a foreible physical *Necessitation*, by a Gracious Attraction and *Sapiential Conduct*, agreeable to the Reason and Liberty of the Creature, as long as we exclude the Co-working of *Omnipotency*, nor deny the infallibility of

Divine Predefinition, which may be secured with the security of the Creatures Liberty.

In a word, to deny God to be the Sovereign Governour of the world in proper sense, 1. Is a denying him to be God: it being a term of *Relation*, comprising Government, and not of meer *Nature*: When it is commanded us that we have no other Gods, and when we are required in the holy Covenant to take the *Lord* for our God, and give up our selves to him as his people, it most plainly expresseth that his *Governing Authority*, or his *Sovereignty* is comprehended in the term *God*. And indeed having made a *Rational-free-creature*, whose *Nature* requireth *Moral Government*, it followed by necessary resultancy that he that had sole *Authority* and *sufficiency*, must be his *Sovereign*.

2. These Proud Blasphemers that deny Gods proper Government, do contradict the very drift of Scripture, that calleth him our *King* and *Governour*, and requireth our subjection and obedience.

3. They deny the being of Gods *Laws*, both the *Law of Nature*, and the *Written Laws*, and so blot out the Word of God, and the sense and use of all his works. Though they allow them a certain *Physical operation* on us, yet as *Laws* they do oblite-rate them: that is, as they are *Norma officii & iudicis*, our *Rule of duty*, and *expectation*, and Gods resolved way of *Judging*.

4. They hereby overthrow all *Duty as such*; and make *Good actions* to be but as the motion of the arrow that hits the white, and to have none but a *Physical goodness* in them. For there can be no proper obedience, where there is no proper *Government* or *Law*.

5. Hereby also they deny all *Inward Virtue*: For this also can have but a *Physical Goodness*, if *Government* and *Laws* be down.

6. Hereby they deny the *Being of sin*: For where there is no *Law and Government*, but meer *Physical necessitating motion*, there is no *Transgression*. And therefore when they make a deal of talk about *Purging away sin*, it is not sin indeed that they mean; but a meer *Physical disease* to be *Physically expugned*.

7. Hereby they deny all the proper *Judgements* of God by

Christ at the last day, and make his *Judgement* to be nothing but *Execution*.

Yea, and 8. All proper *Execution* is denied, as *Vindictive*, or *Remunerative*, and so all *Justice*.

9. The Authority of every Prince on earth is overthrown. For there can be no *Authority* but from *Gods Sovereign Authority*, any more then any *Being* without derivation from the first *Being*. They may talk to the ignorant of *Contracts*, and *Peoples Will* being the *Original* of *Governing Authority*, and *deifie* the *multitude* and make them give that which they *never had*; but a mean understanding may perceive their folly.

10. Hereby they destroy all *humane Laws*, that must receive their strength from *Gods Laws*, or have none: and so they absolve all subjects in the world from conscientious obligations to obedience. If *God* have no proper *Governing Laws* but *Physical motions*, then we are no further obliged to obey men, by any *Law of God*, then we are effectually moved to it, and then we do obey them. And if so, then we can owe no more obedience to Parents, Masters, or Princes then they force us to! If they can make us obey them, well and good: If not, we break no *Law of God* by disobedience.

These and many such like are the consequents of that horrid doctrine that denyeth *God* to be the *Sovereign Ruler* of the world. In a word, it dasheth out at once all *Government*, *Law*, *Justice*, *Obedience*, *Good Works*, and all *Morality*, dissolving the whole frame of the *Universal Monarchy* of the world, and *laying God to be our God*, and *man to be man and his subject*.

But if you yield that *God is the Governor of the world*, it is then most evident that *there's a life to come*. For if he *Govern* it is by *Laws*, and *Judgement*: And if by *Laws*, which are they? There is nothing known among Rational men, by the name of a *Law of God*, which containeth not *Promises* and *Threatnings* of *Rewards* and *Punishments* hereafter. He hath no *Laws* for the *Governing* of this world, that contain no *Motives* but from *Temporal things*. And I shewed you before, that he *said not*, he *cannot Govern* the world by falsehood and deceit. And we see here by experience, that there is no such *Execution* in this life, of the *Laws of God*, as are sufficient to the ends of *Government*. The wicked prosper, and destroy the just: The best do most *despise* their flesh, and are opprest by others. You see this your self.

and make it an Argument for your Infidelity. But stay a little till the Assizes come. It follows not that there is no Government or Justice, because the Thief or Murderer is not hanged before the Assizes, or as soon as he hath done the fact. Eternity is long enough for their punishment. If God then be the Governor of the world as most certainly he is, then is there a Reward and Punishment hereafter ; and Gods Day will come, when Mans is past.

Quer. 14. My next Question is, whether you think that God should be Loved, and Obeyed, or not ? If not, then certainly none should be Loved or Obeyed. For none deserves it, if he deserve it not, from whom we are, and have all our benefits. But if he be, then I further Question you.

Whether it be likely or possible, that any man, or at least all the best people in the world, should be losers by God, and their Love and obedience to him ? And whether it be Credible, that Goodness and Obedience to the Lord, should be the constant certain way to mens undoing, loss or misery ? I think you will say, if you believe that there a God, that this cannot be. For certainly, he that sets us a work, will own us in it, and save us harmless. An honest man will take it for a disgrace to him, that his service should be the shame and misery of his servants, and he should make them no satisfaction. If God be not Able to bear us out, he is not God. And his Wisdom and Goodness assure us that he will do it. So that there is no Possibility that Goodness should be mans loss, and any should finally be losers by God. On this assurance I am encouraged to lay out all my time and labour, and dare boldly venture all that I have, in the work of God : For I am sure I cannot lose by him.

But be thou judge thy self whether his service would not make us losers, if there were no life but this (though I confess the loss would be small and short :) Who are so hated, and persecuted as they that serve God best ? How many thousands of them have been fain to give up their bodies to Tormentors, and their lives to the devouring flames ? The very work of God consisteth in flesh displeasing things : To deny our selves and contemn this world, and live soberly, and righteously and godly in the world, and to be for this the scorn of men, is the lot of the obedient.

If you say, This is not the Lot of any but those that are ever righteous,

righteous, I answer 1. We cannot be ever obedient to God. 2. You contradict the experience of all ages. Even the formal Godliness is hated by the Profane; and temperance by the drunkard; and he shall be their scorn that runs not with them to excesses of riot: *Seneca* tells us that it was so even at *Rome* among the Heathens, that he was their derision that would not be as bad as the rest. If therefore in this life only we had hope, we were of all men most miserable, 1 Cor. 15.19. Not but that even here we have the far better life than wicked men: But that is because it favoureth of the life to come to which it hath relation. Otherwise we should lose our credit, ease, pleasure, profit in the world, and have nothing for it. Faithfully Labour for God, O my soul; and never fear being a loser by his work.

Quer. 15. I further ask, whether you would be alone of this brutish Opinion, or would you have all others of your mind? If you would not have others Believe as you do, it seems you think not well of your own opinion but take it to be naught for men to hold. And why should not all men hold it if it were true? But if you would have all of that mind, it were time for you to look about you. Certainly the Law makers would make other Laws then now they do, and men would lead other kind of lives: And what security you would have of your goods, or houses, or lives a week, from the malice or covetousness of others, I cannot imagine. You would not dare to travel by the way, or look out among men: You could not trust your servants, nor your wives, or husbands, because there would be nothing but temporal punishment to restrain them, which cunning might escape. I do not think but you would rather have servants, or neighbours or husband, or wife, that believe a Life to come, than those that do not, if you had tryed others but a little while, and seen how little they were to be trusted, and consequently how bad your opinion is.

Quer. 16. And I would know, whether you pretend to any honesty and Conscience, or not? If not, you will give us leave to judge of you, and trust you accordingly. If you do, then upon what ground is it possible for you to be honest? If you believe no life to come, you must take your pleasure here on earth for your chiefeſt happiness: and you cannot believe any proper Government of the world by the Laws, Rewards, and punishment, ſufficient to restrain men from their ſin. Virtue can be

no Virtue, if God no more regard it; and sin is no sin, if against no Law. Indeed while you live among Believers, where vice is in disgrace, you may for your credit seem to be *virtuous*: But your Profession alloweth us to judge that you avoid no evil that you dare commit, if it do but suit with your *fleshy interest*. He that believeth no Life to come, and tells me so, doth bid me, in effect, to suppose him resolved for all the wickedness imaginable, so far as he dare, and hath temptations and opportunity. Are you of this Brutish judgement! I shall expect from you then no better then a brutish life: and trust you less then I would do a brute, because you have more interest and temptation to do evil, and more cunning to perform it. Are you *Brutists* in opinion? Then you are already habitually perfidious, cruel, covetous, malicious, murderers, whoremongers, thieves, liars, and worse, if any thing be worse! For honest you cannot for shame expect that any should esteem you. I will not believe a word you say, further then some interest of your own is concerned in the truth of it.

Qu. 17. If it be not the very Light and Law of Nature that teacheth and obligeth a man to believe a life to come, how comes it to pass, that all the world, except a few Savages and Cannibals, and here and there an Apostate among us, do universally profess to believe it? The Jews, the Turks, the Heathens of most Nations, besides the Christians, do all make it an Article of their Belief. We differ indeed about the way (and yet are all agreed that *Godliness* and *Honesty*; fearing God, and doing *Righteousness*, are necessary); but that there is another life, we are in almost all the world agreed. And will you go against the light of humane Nature it self? Or with what face can you expect that here and there such a wretch as you, should be though wiser then all the world, till you give us better evidence of your wisdom? And how justly do they perish that will follow you?

Quer. 18. Are not those that Believe the Life to come of Holy lives (for the generality) then those that do not? And whether is it like that God should reveal his mind to them, or unto wicked wretches? and is it liker that he should forsake all the holy persons of all ages, and give them up to deceit in the greatest matters, who most diligently study and pray for Knowledge, rather then forsake those sensual wretches that wilfully forsake him?

Quer. 19. Is there not in thy own Conscience, at least somer-

times, some fears yet left of a life to come ? I believe there is : and when thou hast done thy worst, thou wilt hardly perfectly overcome them. Doth not conscience say, *O but what if there should be a Hell for the ungodly ? Where am I then ?* Hearken then to thy Conscience.

Quer. 20. Dost thou believe that spirits in borrowed shapes have oft appeared unto men, and in voices spoken to them, to draw them to sin, or to perdition ? If thou do believe it, thou maist easily believe that there is a Hell which they are so busie to perswade us to, and a Heaven of which they would deprive us. If thou believe not that there have been such Apparitions, I am able to give thee undeniable testimonies. Read what I have said in my Treatise against Infidelity of this. Read *Remigius, Bodin, Danesi, Malillus Maleficorum, &c. of Witches* ; and Read a little Book called *The Devil of Mason*, where is abundant testimony of his Vocal conference, for about a quarter of a year together, in the house of a godly Minister in a populous City, before Papists, Protestants, and all. Many I could give you that were done here at home.

In these twenty Questions I have but endeavoured to *prepare* you to *Believe*, by shewing you the *very Light of Nature* : But it is a lively faith in the word of God that effectually prevailed against Infidelity : and therefore next let us come to that. I will not so much lose my time as to cite particular Texts of Scripture, for that which is the very work and drift of the Scripture. But because thou canst have no shift in the world for thy Brutish unbelief, but by denying the Scripture to be the Word of God, I referre thee to that which I have written in the Books forementioned to prove it : And at this time shall add to what is there said, but these few Questions.

Qu. 1. If the Scripture be not the Word of God, How could it tell us of the making of the world, and such like things, which none but God alone could tell ? I know you will say, *I know not whether it tell us true or not ; or whether the world were not, as Aristotle thought, from eternity.* But tell me this then (to pass by the rest now) How comes it to pass that in all the world, there are no Books or Monuments known of any longer standing then the time that Scripture assigneth to the Creation ? It is not fix thousand years since the Creation. If the world had lasted thousands and millions of years before, is it possible that all its Antiquities should be lost,

and not one to be seen, nor mentioned by man in all the world, (For the fabulous tales of some in *China*, without all proof, are not worth the mentioning.) Certainly some Book would have been saved, or some Cities, or lasting piles or stony monuments preserved, or some sign or tradition kept alive, of some of all those many thousand years.

If you say, that *Writing* or *Printing* were not then known; you come to that which confounds you more. How is it possible that in so many hundred thousand years, the world grew to no more *experience*, and *Arts* and *Sciences* were ripened no more, when now they have ripened in a shorter time? How is it that *Printing* and *Writing* were not found out? and that all *Sciences* and *Arts* are of so late invention, and as it were, but in their youth? Certainly *Knowledge* is the daughter of *Experience*, and *Experience* the daughter of *Time*; and therefore if the world had been from eternity, it must needs have been many a hundred thousand years ago at a far higher state of *Knowledge* than is yet attained in the world. For every age receiveth the experiences and writings of the former, and hath opportunity still to make improvement of them. At least the world could not have been ignorant so long, of *Printing*, *Writing*, and a hundred things that are certainly of late invention. It is therefore an incredible thing that an *Eternal world* should lose all the memorials and monuments of its *Antiquity*, before the *Scripture-time* of the Creation. And therefore doubtless it began but then.

Qu. 2. And if God were not the Author of the *Scripture*, how come so many clear and notable *Prophecies* of it to be fulfilled? How punctually doth *David*, and *Isaiah* (53.) describe the sufferings of Christ, and *Daniel* foretell the very year? and so of many others?

Qu. 3. And how comes it all to contain but one entire frame, conspiring to reveal the same doctrine of grace and life, (at first more darkly, and in types and promises, and afterwards more clearly in performance) when the writers lived at hundreds and thousands years distance from each other?

Qu. 4. And if thou hadst not a blinded prejudiced mind, thou wouldst perceive an unimitable *Majesty* and *spirituality* in the *Scripture*, and wouldst savour the spirit of God in it as its author: and wouldst know by the *image* and *supercription*, that it is the *Word of God*. It beareth unimitably the *Image* of his *Power*, and

and Wisdom, and Goodness ; so that the blessed Author may to a faithful soul be known by the work.

Qu. 5. If the Scripture came not from the Spirit, it could not give or cause the spirit ; and if it bore not Gods Image it self, how could it print his Image upon the souls of so many thousands as it doth ? The Image of God is first engraven on the seal of his holy Doctrine, and thereby imprinted on the heart. There is no part of that *holy change* on man, but what that *holy Doctrine* wrought. If therefore the *change* be of God, the *Doctrine* that wrought it is of God : For both of them are the *same Image*, answering each other, as that on the seal and on the wax. But it is most certain that the *Holy change* on the soul, is of God. The *nature* of it sheweth this : For it consisteth in the destruction of our sin, and the denial of our selves, and the raising the heart above this world, and the total Devoting of our selves and all that we have to God, and conforming our selves to his will, and resting in it, and seeking and serving him with all our power, against all temptations, and living in the fervent Love of God, and of our Brethren, and desires after everlasting life ; and a taking Christ for our Lord and Saviour, to reconcile us to God, and do all this in us by his Spirit : And surely such a work as this must needs be of God. If it be *Good*, it must needs be *Originally* from *him* that is *most Good* : this is undenyable. (And he that will say, this is *Evil*, is so much of the Devils nature and mind, that it is no wonder if he follow him, and be *Brutified*). And you cannot say, that the *Work* is *good*, and the *Doctrine* *bad* : For the *Work* is nothing but the *Impress* of the *Doctrine* : And God doth not use to appoint or use a *frame* of *falsehoods* and *deceits*, as his ordinary *means* to renew mens souls, and work them to his Will.

Perhaps you will say, that you see no such change made by the Word, nor any such spirit given by it unto men, but only the effects of their own Imaginations. But, 1. The Question is, Whether they are *True* or *false Imaginations* ? Gods truth causeth that *Impress* on the mind of man, which you call his *Imaginations* : For where should *Truth* be received, but in the *mind* ? and how should it work, but by *cogitation* ? They are *cogitations* above and contrary to those of flesh and blood, that are wrought by this *holy Doctrine*. It is nevertheless of the *spirit*, because it moveth man by *consideration*.

2. And if you see not a work on the hearts of the regenerate appearing in their lives, which raiseth them to a far better state then others, it can be no better then *strangeness* or *malice* that can so far blind you.

3. But if it be so with you, give leave yet to the persons that know this holy change in themselves, to believe the more confidently the Word that wrought it. We know that we are renewed and passed from our former spiritual death to life: and therefore that it was the *Truth of God* that did the *Work of God* upon us. Nothing but *Truth* can *sanctifie*: But the *Word* doth *sanctifie*: therefore the *Word* is *Truth*.

Indeed the *Holy Church* of Christ throughout all ages of the world, hath been his *living Image*, and so a *living Witness* of his *Word*, as shewing by *their lives* the transcript of it in *their hearts*. It is easie for any that know them, except the maliciously blind, to perceive that the true servants of Christ are a more purified, refined, honest, conſeconable, holy, heavenly people then the rest of the world. For my part, I am fully convinced of it; I see it; there is no comparison: for all their imperfections which they and I lament, I am fully satisfied that there is much more of God on them then on others. And therefore there is much more of God in the *Doctrine* that renewed them, then in any other: The *Church* is the *living Scripture*, the *pillar and ground of the truth*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. the *Law is written in their hearts*, Heb. 8. 10. better then it was in the *Tables of stone*, 2 Cor. 3. 3. And by their *holy Love and Works*, the world may know that *Jesus Christ* was sent of the *Father*, and may be brought to believe in him, by their *Unity*, John 17. 21, 22, 23. Matth. 5. 16. God would not concur so apparently and powerfully with a *false doctrine*, to make so great a change in man; nor so far own it, as to use it for the doing of the most excellent work in all this world, even the gathering him such a *Church*, and *sanctifying* to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14.

If you say that *some of the Heathens have been as good*: I answer, 1. The *Goodness* found in them, is but in *temperance*, *fidelity*, and such like; and got a *holy spirituality*, or *heavenliness*, no nor a *through-conscienciousness* in what they knew.

2. *That good was rare in comparison of that which the Gospel worketh*, as well as *small*.

3. *That good which they had, was wrought only by some*

Scraps or parcels of the *same* *holy* *Truth* that is contained in the *Scriptures*. And therefore even so much *Truth* among the *Hethens* as profited them to any *Reformation*, was the word of *God*, and owned by him.

Quer. 6. Do you believe that *Jesus Christ* did rise again from the dead, or not? and that he and his *Disciples* did work those many uncontrolled *Miracles*, or not? If you do believe it, then what need you further testimony to prove the *doctrine* to be of *God*? or to prove that there is a *Life to come*? Shall the Captain of our *Salvation* himself *Rise from the dead*, and *conquer death*, and *ascend up into Heaven*, to shew us that there is a *Life to come*, and yet will you not believe it? Or would *God* lend to any man his *Power* to confirm a false *doctrine* to the *world*? If so, then 1. It would be *God* himself that should mislead us: For it is he that worketh the *Miracles*, or granteth special *Power* to the instrument to do it. 2. Man should be unavoidably misled. For if a *man* *rise from the Dead*, and *raise others*, and give to thousands the guists of *Languages*, *healing*, and the like, and all this have no greater contrary evidence from *God* of some contradiction or controllment, I am unavoidably deceived; and neither my greatest *innocency*, or *diligence*, or any other help from men, could possibly relieve me. And he that can believe that the *Infinitely Powerful, Wise, and Good*, is either necessitated or disposed to deceive the *world*, and Rule them by *deceit* and *falshood*, and to lend his *power* to confirm a *doctrine* that he *hateith*, and is against himself, this man indeed believeth not that there is any *God*. 3. Even the *Brutists* themselves and all the *Infidels* with whom we talk, will confess that if they should see *Christ* *Rise*, or see such *Miracles*, they would believe: and therefore they do confess that they are cogent *Evidence* to those that know of them.

Obj. Did not the *sorcerers* in *Egypt* work *Miracles*?

Ans. 1. Wonders they did, but not *Miracles*. 2. They were controlled and shamed and disowned by *God*, by *Moses* his contradictory conquering *Miracles*.

Obj. But some might have dyed between the *Magicians* wonders and *Moses* controlment, and so have been unavoidably lost.

Ans. 1. The time was neer, and that not likely of those that knew of them. 2. At the first wonder of the *Magicians*, *Aarons* *Rod* swallowed up their *Rods*, *Exod.* 7.12. and therefore the conquer obliged them to suspend belief of the other. 3. The *Miracles* of

Moses were not to reveal a new doctrine of salvation that could not otherwise be known : but partly to convince Pharaoh that the Lord was God, and partly to cause him to let go the Israelites. The peoples salvation lay not on the latter ; and the former they had abundant means to know by the works and light of Nature it self. And the *Magicians* wonders were not to reveal a New false doctrine any further then to contend againg *Moses Miracles* ; and if they had, yet being against the doctrine of the whole Creation, that revealeth the Creator, no man could be excusable for believing them, because God hath given so full a testimony before against them, so that this objection is plainly but an impertinent cavil.

But I doubt not but you will say, that you are not sure that Christ rose again, and that ever such Miracles were done. I Ask therefore,

Quer. 7. Whether it be possible, that so many and so wise and godly men (as their writings prove them) should give up their lives and all that they had and could have hoped for in this world, to perswade the world that they saw Christ Risen, if it were false ; and to draw them to believe a falsehood that tended to the worldly ruine of them all ?

Quer. 8. And is it possible that if they had been so bad and mad, that so many thousands would have believed them, when their own frequent Miracles, Language, &c. were the witness of their fidelity to which they openly appealed ? and this in the very age and place where all these things might easily be confuted if untrue ? If I should pretend to convince the world by Languages not learned, and by other Miracles and gifts which I never had, would countreys, or any sober persons believe me ? or should I not be the common scorn ? Would the Churches of the world have been planted by pretended Miracles that never were ? would they all have given up estates and lives upon an evident lye ? It was easie for them all to see and hear whether these things were done or not. And therefore he that seeth those Churches which were the proper effects of Miracles, may know the Cause ; A realeffect had a real cause.

Quer. 9. Was it possible that so many hundred or thousand persons, dispersed about the world on a sudden, could without coming near each other, agree both upon one and the same false doctrine throughout, and on the same practices to deceive the world ?

Quer. 10. Is it possible that among so many thousands, that were
men, or death, or common ingenuity, would not have found
some to have repented, and opened the deceipts of all the rest?

Quer. 11. Is it possible that so many Hereticks that did fall
from them and set against the true Apostles, would none of them have
disclosed the deceipt, if really the Miracles had not been done?

Quer. 12. Is it possible that none of the Jews, their bitter En-
emies, nor any of the Learned Romans of that age, would have dis-
covered the fraud, and by writing confuted the matters of fact,
being publik, and if false, so easily confuted? Where are the
Books that ever any one of them wrote to disprove any of
these Miracles? If you say, *The Christians burnt them*; give
us the least proof of it if you can. When did any Jew com-
plain of such a thing? Nay how could the dispersed persecuted
Christians destroy the writings of their reigning enemies? The
writings of Jews and Romans then written remain to this
day, and had fuller humane advantages of preservation,
then any that are against them. No Jews or Romans
complained or to do this day complain of such a thing; nor
tell us of any such writings of theirs, that ever were in the
world.

Quer. 13. Nay the Jews confessed the Miracles themselves,
and had no shift left for their unbelief, but by Blaspheming
the Holy Ghost, and saying that they were done by the Power of
the devil.

Quer. 14. All the dispersed Churches and Christians of the
world, have universally concurred in delivering us down these mat-
ters of fact, and the Writings that contain them; and this as a thing
that they grounded all their hope of Salvation on, and for which
they contemned this present world: And the Enemies that
gainsaid their doctrine, did not gainsay these matters of fact.
Could this be feigned?

Quer. 15. Have I not fully manifested in my Book against In-
fidelity (to which I must again dismiss you) that there is a full
and infallible Evidence, that this Scripture was written by the
Apostles, and Evangelists, and these Miracles done, as there
is that any of the Statutes of this Land are the current
Statutes of those Parliaments that are said to make them?
And your Lands and Lives are held by the credit of these
Statutes;

A word or two to the objections of a *Masked Infidel* of this Country, *Clem. Writer.*

Saith he, *Men be not commanded to believe these Statutes on pain of damnation: Therefore the case is not like.*

Answ. But men are commanded to obey them upon pain of death; and believing is prerequisite to obeying: therefore the case is like. Death is the utmost penalty that man can inflict: or if there be greater, it all runs on the same foundation: And sure that evidence that proves men *culpable* for breaking mans *Laws*, must prove him *culpable* for breaking *Gods*. You have no other *eyes* to read the *Laws of God*, then those by which you read mans *Laws*: And doth it follow that God must not condemn you for breaking his *Laws*, when men do but hang you for breaking theirs? Sure Gods *Laws* and mans may be printed in the same *Character*, and *read* with the same *eyes*, and both have the same *Natural* means of *delivery*, and yet the sin and punishment differ as the Authority doth.

Objection. *But (saith he) Can the Miracles confirm the Scripture, when it is the Scripture that reports the Miracles?*

Answ. 1. Cannot a *Statute* tell you what *Parliament* made it, and what *matters of fact* were the occasion, and also what shall be your duty upon pain of death? so that the *Makers and facts* shall give force unto the *Law*, and yet the *Law* reveal the *makers and facts*? Do not *Church Constitutions* do the same? The *Scripture* hath two parts: the *History* and the *Doctrine*. May not the *History* confirm the *doctrine*, and that *doctrine* oblige us to our *duty*?

2. But you suppose that the *Miracles and facts* can only be known by a *Divine belief of the History*? But that is false. The *common Evidence* that all *Statutes, Histories, and Actions* in the world have to make them certain to posterity, (as *Cicero's* or *Virgils Writings*, or *Cesars Reign, &c.*) the same have the *Books and Miracles of Scripture* to us. And by these we can know them *de facto* to be such, before we believe them by a *Divine faith*. And as the *Scripture* is a *History* that hath the *same Evidence* as the best of *Histories* have, so it may concur with abundance of *other Evidence* (which I have recited in my *Determination against Infidelity*, and in my *Key for Catholicks*,) to prove the *Facts*; and then those *Facts* will fully prove the

the Truth of all the Doctrines which they attest, and consequently, we shall add to our humane Faith and Knowledge, a Divine faith concerning the *History* it self.

Object. 3. But (faith Writer) If God had means that the Scripture should be a *Law* to all, he would not have writ it in a language which they understand not ?]

Answ. Anything will serve to make an *Infidel*, when the mind is corrupted and deplorable. Were they *no Laws* which the *Romans* wrote in *Latin*, for the Government of all the Nations of the Roman World ? It was enough that the *Rulers of the Provinces* caused them to be so far understood by the Peoples as was necessary to a righteous Government. I mean, those Laws that were added to the proper Laws of that people.

2. Was there any *one Language* then that all the world understood ? And was it not enough that God appointed the *Ministerial Office* purposely to preserve and publish this *Gospel* to the world from generation to generation ? And is not *Translating* (whether by Voice or Writing) a part of that *preaching* or *explication* ? Did not the Ministers of Christ preach the *same doctrine* to the world then, in the *several languages* of the Nations where they came ? And were not the Scriptures presently translated according to the use of the Churches ? Upon how silly a pretence then would your silly Imperial Majesty impose it on the God of Heaven, to write his word in as many Languages as are in the world, if he would be believed ?

I'll trouble you with no more such wretched Cavils : These three are the main strength of *three Pamphlets* written against the *Holy Scriptures* and *me*, by this *Apostate*. Their sum is [*Men* is *man* : therefore *we* are not sure that *Scripture* is *true*, or that *God* is *God* :] I mean [*Men* cannot understand the minds of others but by *signs* : All *signs*, whether *words* or *deeds*, have some *ambiguity*, or *liableness* to *misunderstanding* ; therefore nothing can be known concerning *God* or *man* by *signs*.] These are not his *words* ; but the true scope and life of all the Writings of him and all the *Infidels* *Seekers*.

If you chide me for troubling the *Christian Reader* here with so much against the *Infidels* and *Brutists* : I answer, 1. I did it because that sort increase, and threaten the Land. 2. Because the strengthening of the Belief of the best *Christians*, is the removing the Cause of all their weakness and complaints. 3. And Principally

principally, because when once the certain Truth of another Life is manifested, he must be a Bedlam or worse that will not be Godly, or that will open his mouth any more against a Holy Life. What ! is it possible for a sober man to Believe that he is so near an Everlasting Joy or Misery, and yet to neglect it, and oppose them that make it their chiefest care and labour to prepare for it ? The Brutish hath drowned his Reason ; and the *careless Professor* laid it to sleep ; the *Malicious ungodly Professor* of Christianity fights against it : and only the *serious Holy Christian* doth use it for his Everlasting good.

CHAP. IV.

Holiness is Best for all Societies.

Reader, if thou be but a man that hast the free use of thy reason, I have already removed the greatest impediment out of thy way, and said enough by confuting thy *Infidelity*, to prove that godliness is the *Better part*. Thou hast nothing left now to say against it, but what fighteth against Reason in the *open light*, and therefore I shall find an easier task with thy understanding in all that follows, though with thy corrupted Will and Concupiscence the conflict yet may be as strong.

Well ! if yet thou art not resolved, that *Diligent Serious Godliness is that Good part that all should choose, and better then all thy worldly pleasures*, I shall now discover it to thee in these particulars.

1. I shall shew you that Godliness is *Best* for all Societies.
2. That it is *Best* for every Person. And that 1. It is the *safest* way. 2. It is the *Honestest way*. 3. That it is the *most gainful* way. 4. That it is the *most Honourable way* : and 5. That it is the *Pleasant and Delightful way*. Yea, that there is no other true *Safety, Honesty, Profit, Honour or Delight* but what is to be found in this way. I lay not only all the reputation of my understanding, but all the hopes and happiness of my soul upon the proof of this point. If I prove it not, I will confess my self a fool and undone for ever. But if I prove it, let the ungodly make

this sad Confession, and choose the Better part while they may have it.

I. And first, That *Godliness is the Best for all societies*, (that are just) I prove thus.

1. *Godliness doth Unite or Center all Societies in the Only Head and Center of Unity*; that is, the *Blessed God himself*. A Common-wealth will never have *Peace* in a state of *Rebellion* against their *Sovereign*, (unless he be one that they can overcome:) Nor *Souldiers* in a state of *Mutiny* against their *General*: nor *Schollars* in shutting out their *Master*. *God* is the only *Sovereign* of the whole world. The godly all unite in him. *Ungodliness* is *Rebellion* against him. The *Rebels* are alwayes in his *Power*. There is no *Peace* nor *safety* therefore, nor any *Unity*, but an *Agreement* in *Rebellion* for a while, to any that are not by *Holiness* united in him, and *Loyal subjects* to him, Isa. 48. 22. *There is no Peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.*]

Object. *But do we not see that the main Divisions of the world are about Religion?* Answ. 1. Its true; but not by the *truly Religious*. The great quarrel of the world is *against Religion* in the life and practice of it. 2. It is *unholy men* that cannot abide to be accounted *unholy*, that are the chief dividers. 3. Among the *truly Godly*, there is no division in the *main*, but only differences about the *smaller Branches of Religion*, which are *Numerous*, and *less discernable*, and *less necessary* then the common *Truths*. They are all *Agreed of Truth* enough to bring them to *Heaven*; and therefore enough to unite them in dear *Affection* upon earth. Nay there is not one of them that hath not a *special love* to all that he discerneth to be the *servants of the Lord*. If any be without this, he is *ungodly*. And we are not to answer for the misfarrings of every *Infidel* or *ungodly man*, that will put on the *Name of Christianity and Godliness*. If there should be fallings out among the godly, they cannot rest till they are healed and set in *joyn* again. But you must not then be so unjust as to conclude, that we can have no *Unity*, till we are in all things of a mind. May not men of various *complexions* be of one *Society*? Are not the multitudes of *Veins and Arteries* in your *Bodies*, united in the *trunks and roots*? Is not the *Tree* one, that hath many *branches*?

Object. *But God whom you will needs unite in, is far from us and him*

his mind unknown, and so is not the mind of Princes: and therefore we cannot unite in God.

Answ. In things Necessary to our future Happiness and present unity in special *Love*, the mind of God is more plainly and fully opened to us, then the mind of any Prince unto his subjects. What precepts can be plainer, then to *Love God above all, and our Neighbour as our selves, and first to seek the Kingdom of God, and to Repent and Believe in Christ?* How plain are the Articles of our Faith and the ten Commandments? *Divisions* have been about *niceties*; I hope God will call back his Churches to the Ancient simplicity and *Practical Godliness*, and then the Christian world will be agreed, except the wicked.

2. *Godliness propoundeth and prosecuteth the most Uniting, Excellent, Powerful End, for all that duty that should advance Societies: and therefore must needs be Best for all Societies.* God and Heaven is the common End of all the Godly. They are Agreed every man of them in *One End*; and so are not others. Their End hath that Power in its attractive Excellency, by which it can do the greatest things that are to be done with the will of man. The Ends of the ungodly are small and childish toys. *Our End* also is as the *Sun*, sufficient for all; and therefore no matter of contention: All may have God as well as One, without diminishing the happiness of any.

3. *Godliness takes away the Bell of the worlds contention, that sets men everywhere together by the ears.* It teacheth men to slight the Honour and Vain-glory that the Gallants will fight and die for: And to contemn that wealth, that Towns, and Countries, and Kingdoms are divided and destroyed by. It teacheth men to slight that Money, the *Love of which is the root of all evil, 1 Tim. 6. 10.* It sheweth men a better Treasure, and not only *Verbally*, but *Effectually* teacheth them to trample upon that which the tumultuous world doth so much scramble for, and seek by such rapine, oppression, deceit and blood. If all the Ambitious climbers and State-troublers, were truly godly, they would quietly seek for higher Honours. If all the covetous Noblemen, Souldiers, Landlords, and Rich men were truly Godly, they would never set both City and Countrey into combustions, and poor oppressed families into complaints, for the *Love of Money*. If thieves turned godly, you might travail safely, and spare your locks, and keep your purses. If Tradesmen were all truly Godly, *deceit* would

would not so break their peace. What is there for Societies to strive about, when the bone of contention is taken away, and Godliness hath cast down the Idol of the world, that did disturb them?

4. Godliness takes down the great disturbing and dividing Principle in mans soul ; and that is, *Selfishness* : And it both commandeth and worketh self-denial. Every ungodly man hath a *private End*, and a *private Spirit*, and *Interest*, that is dearer to him then any other. So many ungodly men as there are, so many Ends and Interests : And how then can there be a Possibility of Unity? The wisest Law-givers could never yet contrive an effectual course for the uniting of all these. If *Selfishness* were down, I scarce know what should trouble the peace of Kingdoms, Cities, Families, or any other Societies. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self* : Or, [*Thou shalt not covet*] is the summe and conclusion of all the Law of God, concerning our carriage one to another. And it is *Godliness* and nothing else that perfectly teacheth, and truly (though imperfectly here) effecteth this *Self-denial* : (But of this elsewhere.)

5. God is bath the most perfect *Righteous Laws* ; and therefore is ~~not~~ all Societies. If God can make better Laws then man, then this is past all question: His Laws require nothing but what is for mens good. They prescribe nothing that is dishonest or unjust : They promise the greatest Rewards to the obedient: They drive on the backward by the threatening of the greatest punishments. Their Authority is highest and most unquestionable. They all proceed from one absolute Sovereign, and are the same to all the people of the world : They change not, but are to endure to the worlds end. Whereas all the Laws of men, are limited to their own Dominions, and endure but while their power can enforce them. They are subject to error and injustice, and are not the same in one Countrey as in another, or in one age as in the former : and their Rewards and punishments are but temporal: and therefore though under the *Laws of God*, they are necessary for the Government of Common-wealths, yet without Gods *Laws* they would be utterly insufficient.

6. The way of Holiness is contrary to all *Evil* whatsoever, and therefore hath nothing to disurb a Common-wealth : It is true, we cannot say so of the persons, because they are but imperfectly sanctified. Were they in all things *such as their Lord*, and *such as*

and Religion do require, they would have nothing that might be injurious to any. But surely as a sick man or a lame, is better then a dead corps; and as a man of mean understanding is better then an ideot, and a mean Schollar better then the illiterate; so a man imperfectly sanctified, is better in a Commonwealth, then the ungodly. You blame not the Laws of this Land, because that Thieves and Murderers break them: The Laws are Good, if they oblige men to nothing but what is Good, though bad men break them. The Rules of Christian Religion are most perfect, and direct or command men nothing that is evil. There may be faults in us, but there is none in the holy Laws which we desire and endeavour to obey. Religion therefore is the way to the perfecting and securing of all Societies, and the want of it subverteth them.

7. Holiness doth not only tell men of a right way, and shew them their duty, but also effectually Disposeth their very minds to the performance of it, and causeth them to walk therein. The nature of it is, to be the very Right Disposition of the heart, and right ordering of the life. The truly gracious soul is habitually an enemy to all known sin, and addicted to obey in all known Duties: And surely persons thus habituated, are liker to live according to their Dispositions, then others to live well that hate the good in their hearts which they should practise. Mens Laws can command good, but cannot give men good hearts to practise it, as God doth by his servants. If you cannot tell whether wicked men that love sin, or godly men that hate it, are better members of a Commonwealth, you know not what Societies are for.

8. Holiness destroyeth the root of iniquity, and reacheth men to hate even secret sins, which are in the heart, or which none can see but God alone. The Laws of men restrain the Subjects but from open injuries: but Holiness restraineth men from doing the most secret wrong to others, or once thinking, speaking, or contriving any evil against them. It reacheth the conscience; it cleanseth the heart, from whence all evil doth proceed. 2 Sam. 12. 12. *Deut.* 27. 24. *Psalms* 90. 8. *Eccl.* 12. 14. A man fearing God, as such, dare not deceive or wrong another, though he were sure that it would never be known on earth: For he knoweth that the *Lord is the avenger of such things*, 1 *Thef.* 4. 6.

9. Holiness cementeth the members of all Societies with the strongest cement of endeared Love. It bindeth them together in the

bond of Charity. He is not Godly that Loveth not all men, even his enemies, with that common Love that is due to humanity, and that Loveth not all that Fear the Lord with a special Love. *Psalms 15.4. Job. 13.34, 35. & 15.12, 17. 17th. 30. 14, 23. & 4. 7, 11, 12, 20. Luke 6. 27.*

10. *Holiness maketh Princes and Rulers a double blessing to their people.* It maketh them the more Divine, and bear the most excellent Image of God: How precious is the name of a *David*, an *Hezekiah*, a *Josiah*, a *Constantine*, a *Theodosius*, (though they had all their falls) in comparison of the name of a *Saul*, a *Jeroboam*, an *Abab*, a *Nero*, a *Julian* ! O how sweet is the name of a Godly King in the Subjects mouths ? Even those that are enemies to Godliness as in themselves, (because they cannot endure to be curbed and troubled with it) do yet use to admire and honour it in their Kings and Governors. *Authority and Holiness* conjunct are two such rayes of the Heavenly *Majesty* and *Goodness* as place man in the state of highest excellency on earth, and make him so much to resemble his Creator, as hath given such the highest place in the esteem and honour of the world, of any mortals : And it is not easie for a people to value such Holy and Pious Princes and Governors too highly, or to be sufficiently thankful for them unto God.

1. *Holiness effectually teacheth Governors to Rule for God:* To set him highest, and make it their work to seek his *Glory*, and to avoid all *selfish* contradictory interests, and to own nothing that stands at enmity with his honour : but to judge that they have most happily attained the ends of their Government and lives, if they have promoted the *Gospel* and *Kingdom* of Christ, and the work of Holiness in the world.

2. *Holiness will cause Rulers to preferr Gods Laws before their own ; and to be examples to their Subjects of obedience to God, and to desire that all men should stand in far greater awe of God than of them :* It will make them careful to form all their Laws and Government to the pleasing of God, and promoting mens obedience to his Laws ; and to take heed that there be nothing in them injurious to Christ, or contrary to his Will. It will teach them with *David* to enquire of God, and make him their *Confessour* : And with *Josiah*, to search the *Book of the Law*, and humble themselves when they have violated it. And with *Josias*, *Not to suffer it to depart one of their manners, but to meditate in it*

day and night, that they may observe to do according to all that is written therein: And then God hath promised to make their way prosperous, and to give them good success, Josh. 1. 8.

3. Holiness will cause the Rulers of the world to Love those that are *Holy*, and to promote the Communion of Saints, and to be Nursing Fathers to the Church, even that part of the Holy Catholick Church which they are entrusted with; and to protect them from the violence of men: It will keep them from the sins of *Jeroboam* that corrupted Godsworship, and put forth his hand against the Prophet that spoke against it: Whereby God will be engaged to be their Protector in Peace and War: When Princes and people that fall out with Holiness and take part with the flesh, and set themselves against the servants, the worship, and the wayes of Christ, do put themselves from under his protection, and put themselves under the battering and piercing stroakes of his displeasure: And *wo to him that striveth with his Maker*, and that *kicks against the pricks* of his severity, Isa. 45. 9. Acts 9. 5. & 26. 14. The fatal ruine of the Kingdoms of the world, or at least the final ruine of the persons, is from their enmity and rebellion against the Lord, and because they will not be his Kingdoms, but hate and quarrel with his wayes, and persecute his servants: And Godlinelis preserveth Princes and Magistrates from this sin and ruine.

4. Holiness will cause the Rulers to hate sin in themselves and others, and to remove the abominable thing from before the eyes of Gods jealousie; and to drive away the froward; and not to know the wicked and the proud, and to cut off the slanderer, and the wicked doers; and to see no wicked thing before their eyes, Psalm 101. In their eyes a vile person will be contemned, but they will honour them that fear the Lord. By this means their Kingdoms may be *Holy*, and God will delight in them, and dwell among them, and it shall be said of them, as Jer. 31. 23. [The Lord bless thee, O habitation of Justice, and mountain of Holiness.] And when Israel is [Holiness to the Lord] all that devoure him shall offend, evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord.] Jer. 2. 3. The holy examples, and holy Government of Godly Kings and Magistrates, will draw the hearts of the people to Holiness, and cause it to flourish in the Lands: Whereas the wicked examples and government of the ungodly, tendereth to make all about them wicked: For, as Solomon saith Prov. 29. 12. [If a Ruler bearken-

to lies, all his servants are wicked.] And then they are fuel for the wrath of God, both as offenders, and as enemies: For they will be still rebelling and oppressing him; and carnal interest and enmity will pervert them to use the reproofs as *Asa*, and *Ama-ziah*, and *Jeroboam*, and *Jezebel*, and *Joash* did: and to think with *Saul* that *Doeg* was the best subject that would kill the Priests at his command, and those the worst that would not be tray them, or destroy them: and to say to false accusers as he did to the Ziphites, *1 Sam. 23.21. Blessed be ye of the Lord, for ye have compassion on me.*] And saith the Lord, *Isa. 27.4. Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together.*]

5. Holiness will save Princes and Rulers from the great and dangerous temptations of their Riches, and Honours, and Power, and Pleasures, and will teach them to mortifie the flesh, and live after the spirit (*Rom. 8.1,6,13.*) and will keep them hereby from those sins that would subject them to the consuming wrath of the impartial God, and will bring them to Heaven notwithstanding all the impediments of the world, even as a Camel through a needles eye, by the power to which all things are possible. And doubtless that which maketh men most acceptable to God, and tendeth to the everlasting happiness of the persons, must needs be better for all societies then that which prepareth them for damnation, and keepeth them here under the indignation of the Lord. See *2 Sam. 23.3. Lev. 25.46, 53, 43. Isa. 32.1. Rom. 3.4, 5, 6. & 12.8.*

11. And as Holiness thus maketh the most excellent Princes and happy Governours, so it maketh the most Loyal and obedient Subjects, and is the most powerful preserver of peace in all Societies.

If any shall say, that the people that are accounted Holy have caused as great contentions and rebellions in the world, as any other, witness the Wars in France, Savoy, Bohemia, Scotland, England, &c.] I shall first prove undeniably from the nature of the thing, that true Godliness must needs make the best Subjects, and tend to the happiness of Common-wealths, and then I shall more nearly answer the Objection.

1. Holiness effectually teacheth Subjects to know themselves; To know their weakness and meanness and unworthiness, and to know their places and their proper work. It kills that pride that

makes men think that none are so fit to Rule as they ; and it makes them so humble as to think themselves unworthy of protection in the meanest station. And also it so takes them up with a higher ambition, and sets their heart on the greater things, that they are dead to the Ambition of the world, and can easily leave these things to others : Their Kingdom is not of this world : They are taught to expect affliction and persecution, and not to aspire after crowns. No man can deny that this is the lesson set them by their Lord, and the Covenant which they make with him when they become his Servants. Whereas the *ungodly* having their portion in this life, and relishing and minding most the things of the world, will snatch and scramble and turn every stone and do any thing within their reach for worldly honours.

2. Holiness teacheth subjects to see God in their *Rulers*, and honour and obey them as *his officers*, even with an honour and obedience participatively *Divine* ; And no men can give them a higher honour then they that thus honour them on *Gods accounts* : and no men can give them so full and firm and constant *obedience*, as they that *obey God* in their *Governours* : No man can give them higher *titles*, then they that take them to be the *Officers of God*. Carnal men obey their *Governours* meerly as men that are able to do them good or harm. If they were sure to receive no *damage* by contemning them, they cared not to trample them in the dirt. Though that people sinned in desiring a King, yet when they had chosen that kind of Government, and *Saul* was set over them, those that went with him were such [*whose hearts God had touched* : but the *Children of Belial* said, *How shall this man save us* ? and they *despised him* and brought him no presents] 1 Sam. 10.27.

3. Holiness causeth subjects to obey, and submit for conscience sake : They do it because *God himself* hath commanded them to do it. They pay tribute, and give honour and obedience because it is part of their *Obedience to God*, required of them in the fifth Commandment, which is the first with promise : Outward prosperity is especially promised to them that honour their Parents and superiors. And the commands and promises of *God* with the bonds of Conscience do tie men faster to their duty, and restraine more effectually from disobedience then the words of men alone can do. Conscience holdeth strongly and constantly ; and

and it holdeth as well in secret as in publike ; so that if a man were sure to do a mischief and never be discovered, he would never the less abhor it, as being not unknown to God and conscience. A man that feareth not God and conscience, will never stick to do a mischief, if he may escape the eye and revereng hand of man : *Faux* will set fire to the train to blow up King and Parliament, if he see but a probability of escape. But he that feeleth the bonds of God upon him, dare not rebel.

4. *Holiness* destroyeth *Self-love* which is the Spring of all *discontents*, and *disobedience* : and teacheth a man to own no *Ends* or *interests* but what stand in due *subordination* to the *honour* of *God* and the *common good* ; and in due *coordination* with the *welfare* of our *neighbours* : Whereas the *ungodly* are every man of them an *Idol* to himself : *self* is the only *Lord* and *Law*, set up against *God* and *King* and *Country* ; And if *God* or *King*, or *Country* be served by them, it is but in *subserviency* to themselves, as they look to attain some *wealth* or *dignity* or *honour* by it. The *self-seeking man* is *faithful* and *trusty* to no man but himself. And the *self-denying man* hath no great temptation to be *unfaithful*.

5. *Holiness* doth partly consist of *charity*, and teacheth men to do as they would be done by : And how can it goe ill with any *societies* where *Love* prevaleth, and men are as loth to *wrong* as to be *wronged*, and to do *hurt* to others as to themselves !

6. *Holiness* brings down *Gods blessing* on each particular *subject* : and maketh a people the *delight* of *God* ; and brings them under the *promise* of his *favour*. *Godliness* is *profitable* to all *things*, having the *promise* of the *Life* that *now is*, and of that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. What abundance of *promises* are there to the *obedient* ? Isa. 1. 19. Deut. 4. 30. Exod. 23. 22. Deut. 11. 27. & 13. 4. & 30. 2, 8, 20. Jer. 7. 23. & 11. 4. 7. &c.

7. *Holiness* maketh men *meek* and *patient*, and teacheth subjects not to make too great a matter of any *injury* that is done them ; nor to censure unwarrantably the *actions* of their *superiors* : nor to murmur and stir up *discontents* ; but quietly to bear all in *obedience* to *God*, and for the *common good*.

8. *Holiness* disposeth men to *Unity* and *Concord*, and is as much

much against discord and division as healthful nature is against wounds and sickness. Whence are wars, but from the lusts that war in your members ? Jam. 4. 1. The servant of the Lord must not strive : The new Command of special Love to one another, and the strange forbearance, concession, condescension, forgiving and loving enemies themselves, required in the Gospel, must needs do much if truly practised to preserve the Peace of any nation.

9. Holiness assureth us of so great a Reward to those that obey their superiors in things lawful, and offereth us so much better things upon our patience, and submission, then ever disobedience or rebellion can attain, that hereby it must needs tend to the quiet and benefit of Societies. He that is bound to rejoice and be exceeding glad in his persecution, because his reward in heaven is great, hath small reason to contrive, or fight, or sin to escape the persecution together with the reward, Matth. 5. 11, 12.

10. Holiness teacheth men both to continue obedient and faithful against all temptations, and also to propagate the same resolutions, and to draw all others to obedience with us. It was the excellency of Christ's example, that he would be obedient even when he was falsely accused of treason, and charged as an usurper of Cesar's right. If we should be called seditious, disobedient, rebellious, when we are most loyal, it must not move us from our loyalty at all. In all these ten particulars I have shewed, that in the nature of the thing, it is undeniable that Godliness is the strength and beauty and safety of Kingdoms and of all Societies : in that it engageth the subject as well as the Governours, in all that tendeth to their peace and welfare.

And now you may see by what is said, that there can be no weight in the Objection which pretendeth from the Case of the Waldenses, Albigenses, Bohemians, French, &c. to produce experience against what I am proving. Health may as truly be said to be the cause of sicknesses, as Godliness to be the cause of treachery, rebellion or disloyalty ; there being nothing in all the world except God himself, so contrary to these as Godliness is.

But you will say, Whence is it then that we have the fore said instances ? I answer sometime not authority but malice and cruelty driveth poor Christians to a stone wall, and if they turn

again when they can fly no further, accuseth them of Rebellion; As it was with the Waldenses, the Bohemians, &c. Sometime Princes and States fall out among themselves, and cannot agree about their Titles, and the Bounds and degrees of their Power: And then whoever the people are against, they are sure from that side to hear the most opprobrious Titles, and be used accordingly if it be in their power. Sometime the right of Government is not easily or generally known: as in the contention between the houses of *York* and *Lancaster* here: And then as one party conquereth one year, and another the next, so the people must be called Traytors and Rebells by each party that prevaleth, if they obeyed and served the other party against them: And if they refuse to obey and defend either of them, they will be condemned by both. Sometime the Politie of Empires and Common-wealths is so imperfect and obscure in the constitution, that the several parties that pretend to interest, cannot agree about their Rights, nor the Lawyers agree among themselves: And the people cannot be thought to be wiser then the Lawyers in the affairs of their profession: If *Nero* and the Senate of *Rome* had each of them commanded the Christians to aid them against the other, it would not have been easie for the wisest and holiest of the Christians then to know which part they should have adhered to and assisted: *Paul* thought not meet to decide any such controversie: He commanded every soul to be subject to the higher powers, and not resist: but he tells them not whether *Cesar* or the Senate was the higher powers in a case of contest and division. Sometime a Traytor usurpeth the Government, and Christians think when they see him setted and in possession, that, though they hate his usurpation, yet they are bound to honour and obey him as being possessed of the Government: Thus *Gregory* the great too hastily and flatteringly owned and applauded *Phocas*: and the Christian Bishops ordinarily subjected themselves to the Emperours that came in by blood and violence: Thus the Bishops of *Rome*, and of other Churches in *Italy* and the adjacent parts, submitted themselves (I think too soon) as soon as they perceived him to be conquerour, to *Theodosius*: and so they did to other conquerours. Sometimes, as the General Councils of *Basil*, *Constance*, &c. determined that a Council is above the Pope, and declared the contrary to be a damnable Heresie, and commanded the Bishops and people

to obey them against the Pope: so Senates and Parliaments and the Majority of the States men and Lawyers may tell the people that are unacquainted with such Law-cases, that in this or that they are bound to obey them, upon highest penalties, and that they shall receive to themselves condemnation if they resist them; and so may mislead such as intend nothing but to obey the higher powers for Conscience sake. And though the errour and commands of Councils and Parliments excuse not *à toto* an illiterate Laicke that understandeth not those matters, yet surely *à tanto* it is some excuse.

And sometime oppression maketh a wise man mad, *Eccles. 7.7.* And sometime impatience prevaleth with the weak to do things unwarrantable: & humane passion blindeth Reason: & sometime Temptations prevail in this as in other cases: And sometimes Hypocrites, that never had any true Religion, do shew their carnal dispositions, and unmortified lusts and passions and pride, by their rebellion against their lawful Governours: and then Religion must bear the blame of the actions of those that counterfeit Religion: and of those crimes which it doth most prohibite and condemn.

In a word, Be the accusation against any particular person just or unjust, nothing is more sure and clear then that he is most unjust that will charge the Christian Religion as guilty of Countenancing any Rebellions, Conspiracies, sedition, disobedience, faction or divisions. Christ went before us in his own example to pay tribute to *Cesar*: and commanded us to give to *Cesar* the things that are *Cesars*: and their false accusing him and condemning him as an offender against *Cesar*, did no whit move him from the duty of his state of humiliation. What can be more against all Treason and perfidiousness, then that holy doctrine which commandeth us the exactest performance of every lawful promise, much more of our Oaths, and duties of Allegiance? what can be more against Rebellions then that holy doctrine which teacheth us a life of patience and meekness, condemning private revenge, and commanding us rather to turn the other cheek to him that smiteth us, and to give our coat to him that taketh away our cloak, and go two miles with him that would compell us to go one, that is, to suffer yet more, rather then revenge our selves or break peace, or order, or raise wars, to escape such injuries? It is a crucified Christ that conquered by suffering, that

is your example : And our Religion is but our Conformity to him in his sufferings, and his holiness. He hath made it part of our duty to himself to obey Kings and Rulers, and all Superiors, not only the good, but the froward, and to take it patiently if we suffer for well-doing, and not to return so much as a reviling, dishonouring word, or murmuring, rebellious thought. It is not fighting for our selves, but following him with the Cross, and forsaking all that we have, that Christ hath made the work of his disciples, and the necessary condition of his promise of salvation, *Luke 14. 33.* There is no Master in all the world that so strictly commandeth Patience and forbearance, and forgiving and Love, and Peace and submission to one another as Jesus Christ doth : He sets the hearts of all his servants on another Kingdom, and tells them they have greater things to mind then riches or honours or domination upon earth. He taketh the bone of contention from before them, and bids them leave such things as these to the men of the world, that have their portion in this life. You may as honestly say that the Sun is the greatest cause of darkness, as that Christ and holiness are the cause of seditions, rebellions, treasons, or perfidiousnes in the world. All the world set together hath not done so much as he hath done against them. If men threaten hanging and quartering to such offences, Christ threateneth damnation in hell fire to them : And would you wish him to inflict a sharper punishment, or more severely to manifest his hatred of the crimes !

I tell you therefore if you should find Rebellion and Sedition among Christians, it is but as you may find corruption in the bodies of the living, which is contrary to life and health, and to be found much more among the dead. I am not here pleading for individual persons, but for Christianity and Godliness. If any professed Christians forsake the way of Patience and Submission, and turn to Rebellion and disloyalty, they do far forsake Religion and Godliness, and much more wrong and offend their heavenly master, then their King and Governors. Plead who will for the wickedness of such men ; for my part I will not. I am sure Christ will not plead for their *sin* which he condemneth. He may *justify* them *from* it, upon repentance ; but he will never *justify* them *for* it and *in* it. It is not because they are guilty but for *ways of Godliness*, that any men have ever been guilty of rebellions, or resisting Lawfull powers : As Dr. Ward hath fully

proved in his Sermon on *Rom. 13. 2.* Nothing more tendeth to the ruine of Rulers and people, then to hearken to the Devil and the Enemies of *Holiness*, that would perswade the world into a conjunction with them in the Enmity against the way of Godliness and the faithful servants of the Lord, upon pretence that they are adversaries to **Governours** and **Government**. It is a weighty truth that the foresaid Doctor begins his Sermon with ["Among all the stratagems of the Devil, tending to the "undermining of Religion, and the subversion of the souls of "men, though there cannot be any more unreasonable, yet there "was never any more unhappily successful then the creating and "fomenting an Opinion in the world, that Religion is an Enemy "to Government, and the bringing sincerity and zeal in Religion "on into jealousie and disgrace with the Civil Powers.] It was "by this Jealousie blown into the heads of the High Priests and "the Sanhedrim amongst the Jews, and of *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, that Christ himself was accused, condemned and executed on a tree: By this the Apostles were haled before the "Governours of Provinces; forced from one City to fly to another: for this they endured bonds and sundry kinds of "death. It was through this fancy that the Christians for "three hundred years together endured the rage of Heathen "Emperours, being destitute, afflicted and tormented: Our "Lord Christ was traduced as an enemy to *Cesar*, a man refractory to the Roman Laws, and a *Non-conformist* to the "Religion and Laws of his Countrey.] Thus and more that Author. So that it is no new thing for the most innocent and holy and excellent persons to suffer as enemies to the Government where they lived; nay it hath been the common case: nor is it strange to hear Religion and Holiness charged with these crimes which they are most against.

As for the malicious slanders of the Papists against the Reformed Churches, as if they had promoted all their Reformatiōns by Rebellion, they have been confuted sufficiently by many. At this time, I shall only desire the Reader that would be satisfied in this, and understand the Protestant doctrine in these points, to read Bishop *Bilsons* [*Difference between Christian rebellion, and unchristian Rebellion*] Especially pag. 382. and from 494. to 522. Also *Hockers* *Beckes*. *Polit.* the last Book (lately published.).

And if he would know whether it be an Article of the very Religion of the Papists, that the Pope may give away the Dominions of Temporal Lords that deny Transubstantiation, or hold such like points which he calleth Heresie, or that will not extirpate all that hold them out of their Dominions, and that he may discharge their subjects and vassals from their Allegiance: I only intreat him with his own eyes to read the Decrees of their approved general Council at the Laterane under Pope Innocent 3. and let him but believe his eye-sight. And for their case and confutation, let him also read King James his Answer to Perron's Oration.

Having thus interposed an Answer to their Objection, that say, Religion hath brought forth *Rebellions* (which I confess that Religion which teacheth Rebellion hath done; but the Christian Religion which condemneth it, and engageth men against it is aforesaid, doth not) I now proceed to some other proofs, that Godliness is the greatest security and establishment to Kingdoms and all Societies.

12. Godliness above all things engageth men to be true to their *Covenants*; to keep all their Oathes and Promises of Obedience to Kings and to other superiors; and to be faithful and truly in all their duties to one another: So horrid is the sin of Perjury and Covenant-breaking, that God hath condemned it, not only in the holy Scriptures, but also in the Law of Nature. He will not bear with it in the *Greatest Princes*; how then shall Perfidious subjects scape? What fair excuses had *Saul* for his breaking the Vow and Covenant with the Gibeonites? He might have said, 1. They procured it from *Joshua* by a meer cheat. And therefore no benefit belonged to them from their own sin and fraud. 2. That *Joshua* not knowing who they were, ignorantis non est censurus. 3. That God had forbid to spare any of those Nations. 4. That was not *Saul* that made this Oath and Covenant, but *Joshua*. 5. That *Saul* did it in zeal for the people of *Israel*. Yet for all this in *Davids* dayes there was a famine in the land, for this sin of *Saul*, which was not expiated till seven of his sons (or posterity) were hanged at the Gibeonites request: And though *David* might well see that he might be censured as contriving of this himself for the extirpation of the line of *Saul*, yet would he not forbear the execution, 2 Chron. 21. And when the people murmured at *Joshua* and the Heads of *Israel* for sparing them,

first, they are answered with the Obligation of the inviolable Oath, fol. 9.

So though *Zedekiah* was the King of *Babylons* Captive, force could not excuse his perjury and Covenant-breaking, but God severely condemned and avenged it.

So that every Subject that hath but bound himself in Allegiance to his Sovereign, is under such an Obligation as to a true Believer is more dreadful to violate, then it is to suffer death.

Yea God hath written such a Law against *Perjury*, even in Nature it self, that he must needs be afraid of it, that is not a flat Atheist, lest his appeal to God, do bring the vengeance of God upon him: And in this life the perjured ordinarily meet with that Divine revenge which is the fore-runner of eternal vengeance: The perjured are unfit for humane Society; hated by God, and never more to be trusted by man, till sound Repentance make a change: Which made *Augustine* determine, that he that urgeth another to forswear himself, is as much worse then a murderer, as killing the soul is worse then killing the Body. Seeing then that Religion doubleth these sacred bonds, and casteth Hell-fire into the face of the perjured and perfidious, it must needs be a singular preserver of Kingdoms and all Societies, which fall in pieces where these bonds are loosed; and fall into the bands of God, who is a consuming fire, especially to perjured men.

13. Moreover it is only Godliness that obeyeth with true Loyalty, and carryeth on all works methodically for the common Good. As he that will obey every Justice of Peace in all things that he commandeth, without respect to the Laws or will of the Sovereign Power, may be sooner a *Traytor* then truly obedient, (for every Justice or Lord may arm him against his Prince) so he that will obey the *Princes* of the earth, without respect to the Will or Interest of the Eternal God, will be but a *Traytor* to God, under pretence of obeying Princes, that are but his Officers and Servants. But the godly begin at God in their obedience; and therefore they proceed methodically, and obey men upon right grounds and in their proper places. It is not the most absolute obedience to man that is the best. He that should command men uselessly to fire his Countrey, or to destroy the innocent, or to ravish Virgins or mens Wives, were not to be obeyed, as *Dog* obeyed.

obeyed *Saul*; but God is first to be obeyed. It is he that begins, proceeds, and ends with God, that is sure to do no wrong, nor be misled.

14. *Holiness possesseth men with a publike spirit, and maketh the case of others to be our own, and teacheth us to do as we would be done by; and giveth every man that hath it, a compassion to others in their distrels, and an earnest desire after their welfare, and a rejoicing in it; when ungodly men are all for themselves.* *Psalm 137. 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26, 27. & 13. Acts 2. 44. Mat. 7. 12. Mark 12. 33.*

15. *Godliness engageth men in Doing good, as the very busyness of their lives, which is to be Rewarded with everlasting Happiness: So that besides what is forced from men by Law, they are to be still in the exercise of Charity, and to be zealous of god works; and to make it their study to do all the good they can: And therefore they are certainly the profitablist members in any Society, that are most truly Godly, Luke 10. 29, 30, &c. Dem. 15. 9. Luke 6. 38. Gal. 6. 9, 10.*

16. *Moreover Holiness teacheth men to forgive Wrongs, and to Love our enemies, and to let go our rights, rather then to break Peace and revenge our wrongs: and to forbear even going to Law contentiously, and where our putting up injuries merely to ourselves, may suffice for the avoiding of it.* *Luke 6. 27, 28, 29. Mat. 6. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 6. 7.* And what contention can there be where these Rules are practised? except when the interest of God or others is violated; which is not in our power to remit. If you say, that *These things are good if they were practised:* I answer, 1. You confess then that *Holiness is good:* For the *Rule is God,* whether it be practised or not. 2. I answer, that so much as any man is sanctified, he doth practise it. And therefore if any man live not according to the Rule which he professeth to live by, that is from the remnant of that sin within him, which the wicked plead for, and for want of more of that Godliness which you distaste. Make him more holy, and he will do all this.

17. *Holiness secureth every Society, and interesteth them in the most impregnable defence; even in the Love and favour of the Lord; and in his many sure and precious promises. He hath engaged his Almightyness and Fidelity for such, and rendreth them as the eye of his eye, and hath promised that he will be their defence.* *Zech. 2. 8. Psalm 3. 11. 627. 10. & 59. 9, 16, 17. & 62. 2. wherein*

the ungodly are under his curse, *Psalm 1. 6. & 37.* And which of these Societies is liker to be happy?

18. *Godliness is the surest way to furnish every Society with all the blessings that are truly good for them.* For they have the favour and promise of him that is the giver of them all. *Rom. 8. 28. Psalm 34. 10. & 84. 13. & c 23.* *Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. & 6. 6. Mat. 6. 33.* But wickedness is the certain way to ruine. *Even one sinner destroyeth much good, Eccle. 9. 18.* and one godly man hindreth much evil, as the case of Joseph, Moses, Daniel, and many others tells you.

19. Moreover it is Godliness that is the honour of all Societies: Without this their wisdom is meer folly, and their Riches are but the fetters of their slavery, and canker to gnaw them and testify against them, and their greatest victories may be but murders which shall damn them: and their splendour in the world is but the sign of their misery in the eyes of all fore-seeing men: *Prov. 14. 34. [Righteousness exalteth a Nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.]* What Glory can be equal to the Glory of our interest in God, and of our being his people, and doing his work, and having his presence?

20. Lastly, *How can that be worst on earth, that is so good in Heaven?* The perfection of Holiness hereafter, with the Holy Love, and Praises, and Enjoyments of the Saints, will be their Glory. If you think this worst in your Societies on earth, what do you but renounce it? If Heaven be worst for you, come not thither. If the participation of that which is the felicity of the glorified, be not the felicity of all Societies, I desire none of their felicity.

What if Saints from Heaven would come down and dwell among you here on earth? I beseech you as men of reason, answer me these two Questions.

1. Whether you do not know or verily believe, that they would be more Holy, and Pure, and Exact, and strict, and more averse to all sin, then any of those are that now you dislike as too precise?

2. Whether you would therefore call them Puritans, and hate them, and cast them out, or imprison them, or take them for the troublers of your Countries, or rather for the honour

and blessing of your Countries ? What you would do *by them*, that do *by those* that come nearest to them among you.

CHAP. V.

Times of Holiness are the Best Times.

AND now I have given you all this Evidence, I dare leave it to the judgement of any man that is fit to judge, Whether it be the godly or ungodly that are the *Better Magistrates*, or *Better Pastors* of the Churches, or *Better Members* of the Common-wealth, or of *any Society* ? Judge now whether the *Places and Times* are not *Best* that are *most Godly* ? And whether it be the *Godly* or the *Ungodly*, that are the *Troublers* of the world ?

And yet it hath ever been the practice of ungodly men, to charge it upon them that Fear the Lord, that all the troubles of the world are long of them. *We were all quiet, say they, before this Religion and preciseness troubled us; and this is it, that since it came among us, hath set us all together by the ears.*] But if these men be yet reasonable, I desire them to consider,

1. *That this hath always been the old complaint of the most wicked men, which God himself hath testified against:* When Lot did but gently admonish the abominable Sodomites to forbear a villany not to be named, *Gen. 19. 7, 8, 9.* [*I pray you Brethren, do not so wickedly.*] What said they to him ? and how did they take it ? Why [*they said, Stand back: and they said again, This our fellow came into sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge ! Now will we deal worse with thee then with them.*] Is not this the case between us now ? How are we unpeaceable ? Because we are *against sin* ? If we would hinder men from wronging God, and from condemning their own souls, and others, then forsooth, we are their *troublers*, and we *judge them*, and we *disturb* their *Peace*. Just like the Sodomites, [*These precise fellows, say they, will needs be our Judges, and we must be ruled by them;* before they came among us we had none of this ado;] But did not God, think you, decide the controversy aright ? He first took Lot and his family

away, that the Sodomites might be troubled with that precise and basie fellow no more ; and then he sent fire from Heaven on Sodom, and consumed them all, making them an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, Jude 7. Or as is fully set forth by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. [Turning the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, he condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example to those that after should live ungodly : (Mark this) And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust to the day of Judgement to be punished.]

And now who is it that was troublefom, and the cause of evil ? Was it *Lot*, or was it *Sodom* ? Take heed lest God take the *Lot* that trouble you from among you, and when you are rejoicing that you are rid of them, he serve you worse then he served *Sodom*.

In the daies of *Noah*, no question but that Preacher of Righteousness seemed to the world a singular and a self-conceited fellow : But did not God decide the controversie whether it were *Noah*, or they, that were the troublers of the world ? Saith Peter 2 Pet. 2, 5. [God spared not the old world, but saved *Noah* the eighth person, a Preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.]

When *Israel* fell before the men of *Ai*, it was a doubt wlio it was that was the cause of that calamity ; but God proved it to be *Achan*, who is stoned upon this sentence of *Joshua*, Josh. 7. 25. [Why hast thou troubled us ? the Lord shall trouble thee this day.]

2. And consider I pray you, What a Quietness it is that you have, before you are troubled by the Godly ! It is a Quietness in the high way to Hell : You had the priviledge of damning your souls without disturbance from these precise controllers. Hitherto Christ cold us, that the Devil is thus like a strong man armed, that while he keepeth his Palace, his goods are in Peace : but when a stronger then he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth the spoils.] Luke 11. 21, 22. The Hearts and the Nations that are not conquered by Christ, are the Devils Garrisons and possessions ; Do you

you think that it is best that he possess them still in Peace ? Or that the Preachers of Christ , that plant his Ordinance against them, and batter them, till they are forced to yield, are therefore busie troublesom fellows ? What is it for , but for your deli-
rance , that are *Satans captives* at *his will* ? 2 Tim. 2.
25, 26.

3. *And might you not on this ground also account Christ himself the troubler of the world, as much, and a thousand times more than us* ? For he doth more to disturb men in their sins then any of we : and he doth more for Holiness then all the world besides. And in this sense he confesseth and fore-tells us , that, *he came not to send Peace, but division into the world, into Towns, and Countries, and Families* , Luke 12. 51, 52, 53. If we can have no Peace with you, unless we will disobey our Lord , and serve the Devil and the flesh , and damn our own souls , and suffer you to do the like, then keep your Peace among your selves ; we will none of that Peace : we have no mind to buy your friendship and good words at such a rate ! If your peace will stand with *our peace with God, and peace of Conscience* , we will gladly accept of it : If it will not, we can be without it. Your souls are like sores that may not be searched, or a broken bone that must not be set, for fear of hurting you : You are like men that must have that which would kill them ; or like children that will cry if they be but taken out of their dung, or kept from fire, or from knives. If we do but cross you in the way to Hell , we trouble you, and we break the peace ? Yea, and if we will not cast away our souls everlasting for company ? And is this the case ? Is this the breaking of your Peace ? The Lord will shortly be a Righteous Judge between you and us , and tell yon , who it was that was the Troubler of the Towns and Countries, and of the world.

You find *Abab* and *Elijah* at this contest. *Abab* takes him for the Troubler of *Israel* when a heavy famine was among them : *Elijah* saith, *No* ; but it was *Abab* and his Fathers house that had troubled *Israel* by their wickedness , 1 Kings 18. 17, 18. And which think you was in the right , the Prophet or the King ?

Why Sirs , What is it that *Godliness* doth , that it should be taken for the Troubler of the world , when *ungodliness* is taken for your peace ? Is it our periwading or hindring you from sin-

that trouble you ? And will not the everlasting fruit of it trouble you more ? Then even say, that washing you, or sweeping your houses, or curing your sores, or sickness, or perswading you not to kill your selves, is a troubling of you ? Or is it, (as the Lord hath told us it will be, *Math. 5. 10, 11. John 15. 18, 19. 1 Pet. 4. 4, 5.*) because we are not such as you, and will not do as you do, and be of your opinion, and forsake our Lord to keep you company ? Is it not with good reason ? When we know you cannot save us harmless : and will not answer for us before the Lord ? We know that every man must answer for himself, and therefore we durst not trust you, if you would promise us to bring us off : It is best for you to study better how to answer for your selves. But if you are resolved on it, that ungodly you will be, and that you will venture on Hell to scape a holy life, why should not you give us leave to pity you, and to forbear your folly, and to save our selves ? Will it do you any harm that others should be saved ? Or that others should be Godly ? Your own sanctification indeed cannot stand with your lusts and fleshly pleasures : but another mans may. It will take none of your vain-glory, or wealth, or sensual delights from you, that another man is sanctified, or devoted unto God. And therefore be not angry with us, if we obey the Holy Ghost, that calleth to us, *Acts 2. 40.* [Save your selves from this unoward generation.]

Object. O but (saith the ungodly crew) it was never a good world since there was so much Religion, and preaching, and preciseness, and so much ado about serving God ! It was a better world, when we had but a short Service read on Sundays, and played, and merrily talk together the rest of the day ! There was more Love and good neighbourhood then amongst men then there is now : There was not then so much deceit, and consening, and oppressing, and covetousness in the world : There was more peace, and plenty, and a better world it was then now.

Matters of peace and plenty change often in the same age. And certainly you have as little hinderance now, from being as good as you have a mind to be, as ever your fore-fathers had. Two things I have to say to your Objection.

1. If this be true that the world is so bad, which part is it of the world that you mean ? Is it all, or some ? Not all sure, that were too horrible censoriousness to say. Then God would pre-

tently

sently destroy the world. Sodome had one *Lot*, and his family in it. Well ? it is but *some* then that are so bad. And which part is it ? Is it the *Godly*, or the *Ungodly* ? If *Godliness* be naught, then *Heaven* is naught, where there is *nothing else* ; And then take it not ill to be shut out ? If it be the *Ungodly* that are naught, that it that I am saying. It is time then to *leave* it, and to turn to *God*. Is it not *you your selves* that make the complaint that are the men that make the world so *bad* ? Is it not *you* that are so *Covetous* and *worldly* that you have nothing for the *poor*, and no time to spare for the *work* that you were made for ? nor scarce any room, to think or speak of the *life to come* ? Is it not *you* that have so *little Charity* that you even *hate* men for *Loving* and *serving God*, and seeking diligently to save their *souls* ? Its true, that there was never greater *wickedness* in the world, then since there hath been so much *Preaching*. But *What is that wickedness*, and *in whom* ? It is the *despising* and *disobeying* the *calls* of *God* ; and the *hating* and *neglecting* of a *holy life*. Those that are *saved* by the *Gospel*, may say that it was a *happy message* unto them : but those that *slight* it, and *willfully sin* in the *openest light*, may well say that it is a *bad world* with them : and worse it is, and will be for ever, if they be not converted, then if they had never heard the *Gospel* : It is *you*, and such as *you* that *despise* the *mercies* of the *Lord*, that make it a *bad world* ; and then you impudently complain of it, and charge it on them that will not be as *bad* as *your selves* ; and take away the *candle* and *shut* the *windows*, that the *light* may not trouble *you*.

2. Well ! but say you the *world was better when there was less preaching, and less ado about the serving of God, and our salvation*. I do not believe *you*, and I will tell you *why*, yea, *why I am certain that your words are false*.

1. Because you contradict the *Lord*. God saith those *times are best* when there is most of the *Light of the Gospel*, and most *helps for our salvation*, and when the *people* are most *Holy*. The increase of *Light* and *Holiness* is a *principal part* of the *Glory* of the *Kingdom of Christ*, and of the *Promises* to the *Gospel Church*, as you may see, *Isa. 9. 2. & 36: 26. & 42. 6. & 60. 3. Mat. 4. 16. Luk. 2. 32. Job. 3. 19, 20.* The *word of God* is the *greatest blessing* under *heaven* : together with a *heart* to *obey* and *practise* it, *Exk. 11. 28.* *Blessed are they that hear the word*

of God and keep it.] *Psal. 106. 3. & 119. 1, 2. & 1. 1, 2.* God himself pronounceth them blessed that meditate day and night in his Law, and that make it their whole delight ; and because of the increase of Light and Holiness extolleth the times of the Gospel far above those of the Law, affirming the least in this Kingdom of God to be greater as to the honour and priviledge of his station, then the Prophets, or *John Baptist*, *Math. 11. 11, 12.* And would you wish me to believe such ignorant men as you, before the God of Heaven that contradicteth you ?

2. *I will not believe you, because your objection is nothing but a Blasphemous accusation of the Living God.* If it were true that Preaching is bad, it is Christ then that is bad that doth command it. But I am sure that Christ is not bad : and that such as Blaspheme him, do it to their cost. It is he that hath laid a *Necessity* on us, and *woe be unto us if we preach not the Gospel*, *1 Cor. 9. 16.* and that chargeth us to feed the flock of God, *1 Pet. 5. 2.* Yea the spirit chargeth us before God and the *Lord Jesus Christ* who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, that we preach the word and be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.] If any one be to be blamed for all this preaching and stir for heaven, it is Christ that chargeth it so strictly upon us. And if thou dare lay the blame upon the *Lord*, speak out, and stand to it at judgement.

3. I know it is false that you say, that the world is the worse for all this preaching and Godliness, because it is against the very office of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. Christ was a diligent preacher himself, and dare you accuse him for it ? He came into the world to bring us the Light of heavenly Truth : and dare you say that it were better be without it. It is the work of the Holy Ghost to illuminate and sanctifie men, and do you think that he doth us hurt ? Christ dyed to wash and purifie by the word and Spirit, the Church which is his Body, that he might present it *faultless to the Father*, *Ephi. 5. 26. 27.* And darest thou say that Christ came to do us harm ? By this thy despising of his benefits, thou shewest that thou hast yet no part in him or in his saving benefits, but art in the gall of bitterness and bond of thy iniquities, and thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

Moreover

4. Moreover you are not to be believed because you speak against the experience of all the Prophets and Apostles of Christ. David had rather be a door keeper in the house of God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness ; and judged a day in his Courts to be better than a thousand, Psal. 84. 10. and accounted them the blessed men that might even dwell in the house of God, and be daily taken up in holy praise and worship , Psal. 65. 4. & 92. 13. & 23. 6. When he was forced from the house and publick worship of God, it was his daily lamentation, and he fainteth, and panteth, and longeth after the house and worship of God again , Psal. 42. &c 84. 2, 3, 4, 5. [How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord of hosts ? My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord : My heart and my flesh cryeth out for the living God : —— Blessed are they that dwell in thy house ; they will be still praising thee : Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the ways of them] The Prophet Isaiah saith [In the way of thy judgements O Lord have we waited for thee : the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee : with my soul have I desired thee in the night ; yea with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.] This was the mind of all the Prophets and Apostles : and God hath told us that it is the practice of all blessed men, to Meditate in Gods word day and night, Psal. 1. 2. And yet will you say that it was a better world when there was less of this ? O self-condemning Hypocrites ! Why do you so much profess to honour the Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs of Christ, if you think that they were the troublers of the world, and that their doctrine and practice makes us worse ? Why do you honour them with the name of Saints, and yet despise both their doctrine and practice in those that do but endeavour seriously to imitate them ! Why keep you Holy days in remembrance of the dead Saints, and say that the world is the worse for the living Saints ? O horrible hypocrisy ! to honour their names, and hate their doctrine and course of life, and say that the world was never good since it was troubled with such as they ! Do we trouble you with our Preaching, and praying, and our stir for heaven ? How would Christ and his Apostles have troubled you, that went so far beyond us in all these, and made a greater stir then we, and turned the world (as their enemies charged them) up side down ! Act. 17. 6. so busie was Christ in preaching and doing the work of God, that he neglected

lected to eat his meat for it, *Joh. 4. 34.* and his fleshly kindred would have laid hands on him as if he had been beside himself, *Mark. 3. 21.* It seems if you had then lived, you would have been among the wicked enemies of Christ and of his Disciples, and have said [It was never a good world, since these base fellows made so much a doe with their Religion!]

5. Moreover, you speak against the inward feeling and certain experience of all true Christians in the world. They all have tasted and found that excellencie in the holy ways and Ordinances of the Lord, that they value them above all the world. With David they esteem them above Gold and Silver, *Psal. 119. 72.* With Solomon they say that all the things that we can desire are not to be compared to them, *Prov. 3. 15. & 8. 11.* And with Job they value the word of God above their necessary food, *Job. 23. 12.* And with Paul they count all things Loss and dung in comparison of the excellent knowledge of Christ, *Phil. 3: 7, 8.* They know that it is a thousand times better with them, since God converted them to a holy life then it was before, as well as you know that you are better in your health, then you were in sickness. Try whether you can make men that ever were among those where plague and war and famine raigned, to believe that [it was never a good world, since this plague and war and famine ceased.] You may as soon make wise men believe this, as make experienced godly men, to believe that it is worse with them for their turning to the Lord, and living, holy, heavenly lives. You can never by all your doating and self-conceited prating, make those believe whom God hath sanctified, that they were in a better case before, when they were the slaves of Satan, and served sin, & were under the wrath and curse of God. They feel that within them that will never suffer them to believe you. The health of their recovered souls: their experience of the Goodness of the ways of God: the comforts they have had in the pardon of sin and the hopes of Glory, do make them know that you talke distractedly, when you tell them that they were better before, or that the world is the worse for the grace of God.

6. And we cannot believe you, when you speak evil of a holy course, because your words are against all Religion, and common reason; and much more, destructive of the Christian faith. If God be not to be Loved with all our hearts, and served with our greatest care, then he is not God: or then there is no such thing

as Religion to be regarded. A God that is worse then the Creature, is no God. If we must not seek first the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof (Mat. 6. 33.) as Christ hath commanded, then it is in vain to seek it at all. If there be no Heaven or Hell, let us lay by all Religion. But if there be, that man that thinks it not worth his greatest care and diligence to be saved, doth forfeit the reputation of his reason with his soul. Will you believe that man that saith he believeth that there is an Everlasting Glory to be sought, and made sure of in this life of our pilgrimage and warfare, and yet thinks it not worth our seeking for above all, and worthy all our cost and labour? He speaks a gross and blockish contradiction. A Heaven no better then Earth, is no Heaven. A Heaven that is not worthy the labour of a holy life, is no Heaven. And a God that is not worthy of all that we can do, is no God. Either plainly say that you are Pagans and worse, and believe not any life but this: Or else live as Christians, if you will be called Christians; say not that you believe there is a Hell, if you think a Holy life too dear to scape it.

7. Yea this is not all, but *your words do tend to Brutishness it self.* Pagans did believe (for the most part) a life after this. And Julian that Apostate Infidel himself doth prescribe to all his Idols Priests a very strict and Religious life, according to the Religion which he owned; and professeth that all care and temperance and piety should be used to please God, and obtain the happiness to come. And shall men called Christians take the very Infidels for Puritans, and be worse then Heathens? If we have not another life to look after, then what are we but beasts that perish? If you think that you die like beasts, call your selves beasts, and never more own the name of men. If you are not beasts but men, then have you souls to save or lose, to be happy or miserable for ever. And is it not worth all our care & labour to look after them?

8. Another reason why I will never believe you, that the world was better when there was less preaching and Religion, is because you speak against the very end and nature of preaching and Religion. For the word of God is written and preached to this very end, to make men better. And is that the way to undo the world, to perswade them to amend? O Impudent malignant tongues! What doth the word of God speak against but sin? Doth it anywhere speak against any thing that is Good? or doth

it anywhere command you any thing that is bad? Let the bitterest enemy of God upon earth, say so, and prove it if he can. I here in defiance of the Devil, and all his instruments and servants, challenge them in their bitterest malice, to say the worst they can of the Gospel, or of true Religion, and prove that ever it encouraged men to sin, or that ever any was a loser by it! O wonderful! Must the God of heaven indite such Laws against all evil, condemning it, and threatening damnation for it: and yet will these wretches have the faces to say that it is long of the *Scripture* or of *Religion* that the world is *Evil*? What! Will preaching *against your wickedness* make you *wicked*? If it do, be it known to the faces of you, that it is *you*, and not *preaching* that shall be one day found to be the cause, and be condemned for it. Must Princes and Parliaments make Laws to hang thieves and murderers! and when they have done, will you say it is long of *them* and their Laws that men are *robbed and murdered*? Why this is not yet so impudently unjust as you deal with God. For they threaten but hanging, and he threateneth everlasting damnation against sin; and executeth it on all the unconverted, as sure as he threateneth it. And would you have him yet do more to testify his dislike of sin? Tell me, thou that blasphemest the holy commands of thy Creator? Wouldst thou have him do more then *everlastingly to damn unconverted sinners*, to prove that he is no friend or *cause* of sin? what should he do more? Is there a greater plague then Hell to threaten? Or wouldst thou have him do more to shew how much he loveth Goodness, then to *command* it, and *perswade* men daily to it, and to promise *Everlasting Glory* for their *Reward*? Is there any *greater Reward* to be promised? I tell thee blasphemer, to the Justifying of my Lord, that all the world hath never done the thousandth part against mens faults, as God hath done. Never were there stricter Laws against them, then his Laws. And never more terrible executions. And yet wilt thou say, that its long of God, or *Scripture*, or Religion, that the world is naught? If thou stay a little longer impenitently in thy blasphemy, till death have but given thee the mortal stroak, (and its hard at hand) thou shalt then be answered in another manner, and God will easily justify himself, and stop all such vile and arrogant mouths, and confute thee with an everlasting Vengeance. Remember that thou wast forewarned.

9. Yea furthermore, you are confuted and shamed by your own complaints. What is it that you quarrel with the Law of God for? is it not because it is so strict, and forbiddeth sin, and threatneth damnation for it? Is it not because it requireth so much goodness, and telleth you that none of the unconverted ungodly shall be saved? And what is it that you quarrel with the godly for? Is it not for serving God, and because they will not be as bad as others? And yet the same tongues dare blaspheme the Laws of God, and say, the world is the worse for them! And the same tongue dares revile the godly as the cause that the world is so bad! What should one say to such unreasonable men, that will at the same time murmur at the Holy word and wayes of God, because they contradict the wickedness of the world, and threaten them with Hell fire because they repent not, and yet say it is long of this very word, and the preaching and obeying of it in a holy life, that the world grows worse! O impudent mouths! that at once revile the servants of Christ, because they will not be as bad as others, and yet say that its they that make the world so bad. God will very shortly stop such unreasonable mouths.

10. And if your words were true, then it would follow that all Gods greatest Mercies are worth nothing, yea, that they are a hurt to us, and curses rather then blessings. What is the Gospel worth, if the reading, and preaching, and practising of it, do make the world worse, and only trouble men? What are all Gods Ordinances worth, if this be the fruit of them? And why hath he appointed Pastors and Teachers for his Church, if this be all the good they do? Nay what is Christ himself worth to the world, if those are the worst men that most obey him, and study his word, and diligently seek him! O unworthy souls! is this all your thanks to God for a Christ when you are lost by sin? and for the Gospel that offereth you everlasting life? and for the Ministry of your Pastors that would teach you the way of life? May we not take up the Prophets exclamation, Isa. 1.2. *Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me: The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters crib: but this people doth not know the Lord, nor Consider.*] Your beast doth not take his yoke to be naught for him, and rather choose to be without it. And you are worse then beasts in your dealing with the Lord;

Lord: and when he hath provided you a Christ, a Gospel, Teachers, and holy Ordinances, even the pretiosest things in the world, you unthankfully refuse them, yea and reproach them; and take them to be naught for you, and say that it is long of them that the world is so bad! O horrid ingratitude! when miserable souls are in the captivity of sin and Satan; and within a few steps of everlasting fire, the God of Mercy sends his Son, his Word, and Ministers, to help them out, and set them free, and save them from Hell before it be too late; and what entertainment have they! They are reviled by these wretches as if they came to make them worse, and do them a mischief, and not to save them! Righteous is the Lord that condemneth such as would not be saved, and as took salvation for an injury. And just were God, if he should take away the Gospel, and his Ministers and his people, from so unthankful and unworthy a generation as this that are weary of them, and say they are the troublers of the world, and think that they do them more hurt then Good; and as the Gadarens by Christ, *desire him to depart out of their coasts*, *Matth. 8. 34*. Be content a while, unworthy souls! You shall not long be troubled with a Christ, or with the Gospel, or with Preaching, or with Praying, or with the company of these precise people, that you so much dislike. Sleep on but a few nights more, and pass on but a few dayes further, and you shall come to a place before you look for it, where you shall never have their company more, and where you shall be out of the reach of Preaching, and Praying, and Holiness, and of Hope. And in the mean time, were it not for the sakes of those whom God will convert and save, this troublesome Gospel and Holy people should be taken from you, and given to a people that will be more thankful and more fruitful, because you put it from you and have judged your selves unworthy of everlasting life, *Acts 13. 46*. *Matth. 21. 41*. No thanks to you that England is not like the Indians, and as miserable as you would have it.

11. And why should we believe you when we see that you judge clean contrarily for your bodies, then you do for your souls? I have never heard any of you say, [*It was never good world since our land was fruitfull, and since so much corn came to the markets; It was a better world when men had nothing but roots to feed on.*] And yet would you be believed, when you say that

it was better when men had not so much of the Scripture, and of Christ and holiness, the food, the life, the health of souls?

12. And I the less believe you, because I find that *thu hast been the common speech of others in all former ages*. They that lived in the dayes of your fathers, said so of the former times [*It was formerly a better world then now.*] And if you had lived in those dayes of your fathers fore-fathers, you would have heard them say the same. Its common with men to feel the *evil* that's present, and to praise the days that are past, whose *evil* they felt not, or have forgotten. But hear what God saith, Eccles. 7. 10. [*Say not thou, What is the Cause that the former dayes were better then these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.*] Eccles. 1. 9. *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done, is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the Sun.*]

13. And little cause have we to believe you, when we have present experience that *your words are false*. We see that those are the best, that are most Godly. He is blind that seeth not an exceeding difference betwixt them and such as you that speak against them. Do not we see that *they are sober*, when some of you are *drunken*? and that *they are seeking heaven* when you are seeking the *world*? and that *they are providing for their souls* and *pleasing God*, and *employed in the most sweet and heavenly works*, while you are pampering the flesh, or making provision to satisfy its lusts? Do we not hear *their speeches* are of God, and their salvation, and things that edifie, while you curse or swear, or talk filthily, or idly and unprofitably like dreaming or distracted men? And yet would you make us believe that you are *as good as they*, and that Religion makes men *worse*?

But you say, that for all this they are secretly as bad as others. Foolish malice! If it be secret, how do you know it? If you know it, how is it secret? and its marvail that you do not make it known! Is it not easie to say so by a *Job*, or a *Samuel*, or by Christ himself, if saying so may serve turn, and a wicked tongue may pass for proof? You may say that in secret I commit all the sins imaginable: and how can I disprove you, when I have no witness, but only by desiring you to prove it if you can? But O happy are the servants of the Lord, that are even in secret alwayes in the presence of their Judge, who will bear witness for them, and justify them against malignant tongues!

But

But you say, that *they are as covetous as other men*, though they are more Religious. But this is as shameful a falsehood as the former. Do we not see the contrary in the open fruits? Covetous men are the forwardest to call others *Covetous*, because they would have no body hinder or cross them in their Covetous desires or designs. And then they are saying, [*O such a professor used me thus, and such a one did thus*]; and usually they partially relate the case, as their own Covetous hearts encline them passionately to judge it. And perhaps they may meet with a worldly hypocrite that seemeth Religious; which is no more to the disgrace of Religion, then *Cham* was in the Family of *Noah*, or *Absolom* in the house of *David*, or *Judas* in the Family of Christ. Do not you call your selves *Christians* your selves? And yet *Christianity* is never the *worse*, because you are wicked that profess it. But sure I am that the servants of Christ are not comparable to you in Covetousness. For as I find God describing them in his Word, to be a people *dead to the world*, whose *conversation is in heaven*, so I see that they can spare time from worldly busyness, while *they and their households serve the Lord*; and so cannot you: They are seeking Heaven, when you are seeking earth; And we may know what a man loveth, if we know what he seeketh. And again I must bear witness from my own experience, that in this place where I live, I have reason to believe, that where other men of their ability give a penny to the poor for charitable uses, those that you call *precise and think too Religious*, do give six, if not twice six, and some of them much more then I will express. There are few weeks but we have occasion to try it by voluntary collections for some needy persons, or charitable uses; and therefore we have much opportunity to know: besides contributions at Sacraments, and other publick occasions.

But you say, that *in former times there was more Love among neighbours then is now*; Then there was more familiarity and kindness, and less hatred, and malice, and contention, then now. I answer, Am I not sure by constant experience, that there is far more love among the godly then among you? Do I not see how dear they are to one another? and how sweetly and familiarly they converse together, and joyn in prayer and holy exercises, and consern about their everlasting state? Do I not see that they are ten times more liberal to relieve each other in distress, then you are? Many and many a time I have seen them give ~~ten or twenty~~ ^{10 or 12} shillings,

billings in collections to relieve godly people in distress, when those of you that are richer give but two pence or a groat to your companions, in the like Collections? And what makes them be so much together, if there be not Love among them? I profess to you, I never yet saw anything that is worthy the name of Love and Peace among any other sort of men.

But perhaps you will say, that there are contentions and differences among them about Religion, which the world was never troubled with before. To which I answer, 1. What differences or contentions do you see among them in this Town or Parish? Among five hundred people that you count Precise, what one is there among us that is either Anabaptist, or Separatist, or Antinomian, or Arminian, or of any other sect? What one that separateth from any Ordinance of publick Worship? What differences do you know among us? Is there here any more Churches than one? Do you hear any contendings? Do you see any thing like a difference among us all? For my part, I know of none: Nor but of one in the Parish (that is turned from us) which is a simple, ignorant, harmless man, that turned Anabaptist. For as for the Apostate Infidels that joyn with you that are ungodly, we have nothing to do with them, but lament their misery.

14. Another thing that hindreth our Belief of you, is, that we see that it is only ignorant or wicked men that are of this opinion, and say that the world is the worse for Godliness, or the Preaching of the Gospel. Not a man saith so that knoweth what he saith, and that ever felt the power and sweetness of the Gospel upon his soul: But only those that are blinded by the world, and serve the flesh, and are drowned in lust, and know not what they speak against. And shall we regard the judgement of such men?

15. And moreover, when you say that the world was better when there was less Godliness and Teaching, you contradict all history, and therefore are not to be believed. You know not well what is before you: much less do you know what hath been in your fore-fathers dayes. Be it known to you, we have as full advantage to know that, as you have. Many and many a large Volume have I read, concerning the state of the world before us, which tell us of far greater wickedness in our fore-fathers daies, then are in these. If you will not believe me, I will shew it to any of you, that can read and understand, at any time when you will.

will come to me : I will shew you the words of the Chroniclers, and Historians of those ages, that make more lamentable complaints of the vices of those times, and tell us of far more evil then, and of a far greater scarcity of good, then can be truly spoken concerning us. And are you that never saw those daies, to be believed before them that saw them ?

16. And I am sure also that you speak falsly, because you make the most barbarous Heathens to be most happy, and the worst of men to be the best. If it be best where there is least Religion, and least Teaching, or meddling with holy things; then are the naked Indians the best, and the Cannibals that live on the flesh of men. These be they that are least troubled with Preaching and Religion. And if you think that these miserable souls are best and happiest, I pray you go to them, and be happy with them. And by my consent the Magistrate shall promote your happiness, and send you thither.

17. And would you have us believe you, when you contradict your selves ? Out of your own mouthes will we silence or condemn you. It is Christ that teacheth us to be Holy. And do you not pretend your selves to believe in Christ ? That which you dislike as a troublous or needless thing, is nothing but serious Christianity it self. And do you not say your selves that you are Christians ? Do not you profess the Articles of the Christian Belief ? And what do we but practice that which you profess ? We do but obey that God whom you say you believe in, as the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and all things. We do but love the Lord our Saviour, whom you say you believe in as your Saviour. We do but obey the Holy-Ghost that sanctifieth all that God will save, whom you also profess to believe in your selves. We practise that Communion of Saints which you deride, and yet profess that you believe. We seek after the remission of sin, and that life everlasting, which you take on you to believe your selves. And will you profess to Believe these things, and yet say they are naught, or that it was never a good world since they were regarded and practised ? And do you not profess to take the ten Commandments for the Law of God, which all men should obey ? And what do we but endeavour to obey them ? All that which you hate as too much preciseness, is nothing but the obeying of these ten Commandments. And O that we could do it better ! And do you not use in the saying of the Lords Prayer, to

pray that the *Name of God may be Hallowed*, and his *Kingdom come*, and his *Will be done*, yea even as it is done in *Heaven*? And yet will you say with the same mouth, that it *was never a good world since Gods name was Hallowed*, and since his *Kingdom was advanced*, and his *Laws so much regarded*, and his *Will obeyed*? O hypocrites! Is this *your praying*? and do you look such *prayers* should be accepted, which you hate and speak against your selves? You pray that you may not be led into *Temptation*, but *delivered from evil*! and yet you run into temptation, and take that *Evil to be Good*. How oft have I heard men, when the Commandments have been repeated, which require us to *take the Lord only for our God*, and *not to take his Name in vain*, and to *Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day*, to joyn to it as their *prayer*, [*Lord have mercy upon us, and encline our hearts to keep this Law*] and when they come home, revile those people that are willing to *keep it*, and that will not *take Gods Name in vain*, and forbear the *keeping holy of his day*, as they do themselves. Either give over professing the Christian Belief, and using the Lords Prayer, and praying that you may *keep the Commandments of God*, or else give over reviling those that do it. Either say plainly that you are *Heathens* and no *Christians*; or else never say, that a *Christian Life is hurtful to the world*, nor make it the matter of your reproof.

18. And I must needs say that I am the more assured that your words against Religion are false, because *I know that they please the Devil, who is the Father of lies*; and are just such as he would have you speak, and would speak himself if he had but liberty, and his appearance would not marr his cause. When thou art railing at Godliness, and saying that this Religion is the trouble of the world, and that the servants of Christ are but a company of basie hypocrites, *just so would the Devil have thee speak*. I can prove it fully from the *Scriptures*, and from his *Nature and designs*. You could not speak more agreeably to his mind. If he had hired you, and *written down* every word which he would have you speak, you could not more punctually obey him. Do you plead against Holiness, and for *careless and ungodly life*? Do you despise the *righteous*, and justify the *wicked*? *Just so would the Devil have you do*. If he stood by you and prompted you (as indeed he doth, though you do not know it) those are the very words that he would have you say. Indeed when he is compelled,

the Devil himself speaketh better then you : as in *Acts* 16. 17. he saith, [*These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation*] These are better words then yours : But when he is left to himself, and speaketh of his own, he speaketh just as you do : and shall we believe you when the Devil sets you on, and you speak the words of the lying spirit ?

19. And I the less believe you, when you say that the *world is the worse for Preaching and Religiousness*, because I know from whence this comes. You take that to be the best, that is the worst ; and that to be the worst, that is indeed the best. You judge after the flesh, and take those for the best times when you have most prosperity, and may sin with least contradiction and molestation, and be least troubled in your *sensual* course. These are *your good daisies*, which wise men know to be *your slavery and misery*. It is never a *good world* with you, when your consciences are troubled, and your sores are lancet, and Satan cannot keep his garrison in peace ; and when you cannot be permitted to drink, and swear, and game, and revell without controll. And if this be your *good world*, I had rather have a prison or a pair of stocks with *Christ and the Gospel* which you despise, and with the *means and hopes of the world to come*, then to have your *good world*, which is but the *quietest passage to damnation*. You are not yet to be believed : stay till you see the end, and what comes of it, and then tell us which was the *good world*.

20. Lastly, if all this will not serve, I will silence you and shame you, if you have any shame left. If *Religion* and so much serving of *God* do make the *world worse*, and those be the worst times where there is most of these, then *Heaven* would be *worse then Earth or Hell*, even the *worst place in all the world*. For no place hath so much *Holiness* as *Heaven*. Nowhere is there so much ado about the *Praise and Service of God*, as there is in *Heaven*. There they do nothing else but that which you revile, and that in *biggest fervour and perfection*. They *Rest not day or night* saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come*, *Rev. 4. 8.* Dost thou know the *man on earth* that is most precise, and holy, and diligent for *God*? Why the *lowest* of the *Saints in Heaven* go quite beyond him. And in *good sadness*, dost thou take *Heaven* to be the *worst place*? and think that so much *Holiness* will make it *troublousom*? Bear witness then

against thy self, Out of thy own mouth art thou condemned. How canst thou expect to be admitted into Heaven, that takest it for so bad a place? Thou teachest God to thrust thee back, and say to thee, Be gone; here is nothing but Holiness, which you could not abide: You shall go to a place where Religion and Holiness shall not trouble you.

Well Sirs, Consider now as men of Reason, of all these twenty Reasons which I have given you, and then tell me, whether that be not the better world, and the better soul, where there is most Faith and Holiness.

CHAP. VI.

Holiness is the only way of Safety.

I Have proved to you that Holiness is best for Common wealths, and given you many General undeniable evidences, to prove that it is Best for all men in particular: I shall now come to the particular evidences, and shew you wherein it is that it is Best for all men.

There are three sorts of Good that men have to look after. The first is the security of their Life and Being; the second is their moral well-being; and the third is, their Natural well-being. This last also is divided into three branches, and consisteth in our Profit, our Honour, and our Pleasure.

So that here are five several sorts of Goodness to be considered of; and you will find that Holiness is Best, beyond all comparison, in each respect. 1. In respect of Safety. 2. In point of Honesty. 3. In point of Gain. 4. In point of Honour. And, 5. In point of Pleasure or Delight. If I prove not every one of these, then tell me, I promised more than I could perform: But if I do prove them, I look that you that Read it, should promise presently to come in to God, and a Holy life, and faithfully perform it.

I. And that *HOLINESS IS THE SAFEST WAY*, I prove thus. 1. That man is in a safer state that is delivered from the power of Satan, then he that is in his bondage, and

and taken captive by him at his will. But all the unsanctified are in this captivity, and all the sanctified are delivered out of it; as the Scripture most expressly tells us, Ephes. 2. 1, 2, 3 [And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the Power of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom we also had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, &c.] So 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. [In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God errant will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.] And Acts 26. 17, 18. [I send thee to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.] And Col. 1. 13. [Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.] Satan is the Ruler and the Taylor of the ungodly, that leadeth them to sin, and so to destruction, and keepeth them for torments at the day of wrath. And is he safe that is in the Devils power? If he should appear to thee, and lay hold of thee, thou wouldest not think that thou were safe. But his possession of thy soul is far more dangerous. Thou dost not believe that thou art in his power: But thy blindness sheweth it; and thy enmity to the way of Holiness sheweth it; and thy ungodly life doth fully shew it; and the Scripture affirmeth it of all such: and what need there any further proof? But the sanctified are all delivered from this slavery; and though the Devil may rage against them, he shall not prevail.

2. Moreover, those that are *United to Jesus Christ*, and are become the living Members of his Body, are certainly safer then those that are yet *strangers* to him, and have no special interest in him: But all that are sanctified are thus united to Christ, and made his members: and all the unsanctified have no part in him. *He that bath the Son bath life, and he that bath not the Son hath not life*, 1 John 5. 12. [John 15. 6, 7, 9, 10. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved

you ; continue in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love :] *Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you, v. 14.*] Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27, 29, 30. [Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water, by the word : that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. For we are Members of his Body, of his flesh, and of his bones.]

Judge by these passages whether the sanctified are not safe. If the Love of Christ, and his Merits, and his Power cannot keep them safe, then nothing can. If the Saviour cannot save them, none can. Is not the very flesh of Christ safe ? are not the members of his Body safe ? are not his friends, his spouse and beloved safe ? If Christ can save us, we are safe. For who can conquer him ? Or who can take us out of his hands ? John 10.28. If he be for us, who shall be against us ? and if he justify us, who shall condemn us ? Rom. 8. 33, 34, 35.

But is it so with the ungodly ? No : they have no part nor lot in this matter, but are in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, because their heart is not right in the sight of God, Act. 8.21, 23.

3. Moreover, he that hath escaped the Curse of the Law, and hath his sins forgiven him, and is justified from all things that could by the Law be charged on him, is safer then he that is under the Curse, and hath all his sins yet lying on his soul ; But the first of these is certainly the case of the sanctified, and the other of the unsanctified, Gal. 3. 10; 13. As many as are of the works of the Law are under the Curse : for it is Written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them. — Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.] Rom. 3. 23. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God] And Mark 4. 12. shews, that the unconverted have not their sins forgiven them.] Joh. 3. 18. He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already] And Act. 26. 18. To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me.] Rom. 8. 1. There is no Condemnation

nation to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit] Abundance more such passages of holy Scripture do assure us that all the *unsanctified* are *unpardoned*, and all the *sanctified* are *Justified*, and delivered from the Curse. And which of these are in the *safer state*?

Did one of you owe ten thousand pounds more then he were worth, or had you committed twenty known felonies or murders, would you think your selves *safe*, without a *pardon*? Would you not be looking behind you, and afraid of almost every man you see, lest he came to apprehend you? O what a case is that man in that hath so many thousands sins to answer for? and hath such a load of guilt upon his soul? and so many terrible threatenings of the Law in force against him? Do you not fear every hour, lest death arrest you, and bring you to the prison of the bottomless pit? But the *sanctified* is delivered from this danger. A thousand sins indeed were against us; but we have a *pardon* of them all to shew. In Christ we have *Redemption through his blood*, the *forgiveness of sins*, Col. 1. 14. The law hath nothing now against us: and therefore we are *safe*.

4. Those are *safer* that are *dearly beloved of the Lord*, and *reconciled to him*, and taken for his *Children*, then those that are his *Enemies*, and *hated by him*, and *under his displeasure*. But most Certainly the *former* is the state of all the *sanctified*, and the *later* is the state of the *ungodly*.

You shall see both in the words of God. Psal. 5. 4, 5. *Thou art not a God that bath pleasure in wickedness*; neither shall evil dwell with thee; *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight*: *thou hatest all the workers of iniquity*.] Psal. 7. 10, 11. *My Defence is of God which saaveth the upright in heart*: *God judgeth the Righteous*; and *God is angry with the wicked every day*.] Psal. 45. 7. *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness*.] Luk. 19. 27. *Those mine enemies that would not I should raign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me*.] Ephes. 2. 3. *We were by nature the children of wrath*.] A hundred more such places, shew you the state of the *unsanctified*.

But how different is the case of the renewed upright soul? 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17, 18. [Tee are the *Temple of the living God*; *as God hath said I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people*: *Wherefore come*

out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty.] Job. 1. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.] Rom. 8. 16, 17. The spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if Children then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.] Mal. 3. 17. And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.] Heb. 8. 12. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.] Col. 1. 21, 22. [And ye that were sometime alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight.] Psal. 32. 1, 2. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.] Zech. 2. 8. Hethat toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye.]

Judge now by these plain expressions from the Lord, who it is that is in the safer state, the godly or the ungodly. Is he the safer that is hated by the God of heaven, or he that is most dearly loved by him? He that is under his displeasure, or he that is his delight? Why man! if God be against thee, thou art *nowhere safe*? not in the strongest Castle! not in the greatest Army! not in the highest dignity! not in the merryest company! Thou knowest not but a Commission is gone out for death to strike thee in thy next recreation, or fit of mirth? How knowest thou but death is ready to strike, while thou art eating, or drinking, or talking, or sleeping? Thou hast no security from an angry God. Till he be reconciled, thou art nowhere safe! This may be thy fatal day or night for ought thou knowest. And if once the mortal blow be struck, and thy soul be taken from thy body unrenewed, O man, where then wilt thou appear! O wonderful stupidity! that thou dost not eat thy bread in fear, and do thy work in fear, and sleep in fear, and live in fear, till thou be sanctified!

¶ But to the soul that hath God for his security, what can be dangerous? or what condition (while he keeps close to God) can be unsafe? The Father that gave us unto Christ, is greater than all, and no man can take us out of his hands, Job. 10. 28, 29. Con-

quer Heaven, and conquer the Saints ! There is their City, their garrison, their conversation, Phil. 1. 20. Heb. 11. 10, 16. what enemy, what policie, what power can endanger him, that God will lave and hath undertaken for ? We were never safe one day or hour, till we were friends with God. [Deut. 33. 27. *The Etern. 1 God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*] Psal. 46. 1, 2, 5, 7. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble : therefore will not we fear; though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea — God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early — The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge*] Psal. 91. 1, 2, *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress ; my God, in him will I trust.*] This is the confidence, and joy and glory of the Saints, Psal. 59. 16, 17. *I will sing of thy Power, yea I will sing aloud of thy mercies in the morning, for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble : Unto thee O my strength will I sing : for my God is my defence, and the God of my mercies.*] Psal. 89. 26. *Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation.*] See Psal. 27. 5. & 61. 2. & 62. 2, 6, 7. & 94. 22. Prov. 18. 10. *The Name of the Lord is a strong tower : the righteous run into it and are safe.*] Prov. 21. 31. *safety is of the Lord*] Psal. 4. 8. Quietly may we repose our selves to rest, for it is the Lord only that maketh us dwell in safety.] But is it thus with the ungodly man ! O no : when they say Peace and safety to themselves, suddenly destruction cometh upon them as travel upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape, 1 Thes. 5. 3. [*For their Rock is not like our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges*] Deut. 32. 31. Why else do they desire in times of danger that they were in the case of the Servants of the Lord ? If they thought themselves as safe as the Regenerate, why do they wish at the hour of death, that they might but die the death of the Righteous, and their later end might be as his ? Numb. 23. 10.

5. Moreover, he is certainly more safe, that is an heir of the promises, and hath the word of God engaged for his safety, then he that hath no promise from God at all, nor any such security to shew : But all the faithful have interest in the promises, in which

the ungodly have no share. Surely he is safe to whom the Lord hath promised safety. O what a precious treasure might be here open, to shew you the safety of true believers? I will call out but a few of the Promises for a taste. Prov. 1. 32, 33. [The turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But who so hearkenneth unto me, shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.] Prov. 29. 25. Who so putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.] Prov. 3, 24, 22, 23. My Son, let them not depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion; so shall they be life unto thy soul and grace unto thy neck: then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou lyest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet: Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.] Deut. 33. 12. [The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him, the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.] Psalm 55. 22. Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.] Psalm 14. 5. God is in the generation of the righteous.] Psalm 34. 15, 17, 19, 20. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their trouble. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of all. He keepeth all his bones—Evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate,] Psal. 37. 28. For the Lord loveth judgement, and forsaketh not his Saints, they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.] Ver. 37, 39, 40. [Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace: But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the End of the wicked shall be cut off: But the salvation of the Righteous is of the Lord, he is their strength in the time of trouble: And the Lord shall help them and deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.] Psalm 73. 26. [My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.] Isa. 49. 15. [Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb? Yea, they may forget: yet will not I forget thee] He hath said, I will not fail

fail thee nor forsake thee, Heb. 13. 5. Matth. 6. 25. Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink. [&c.] Matth. 10. 28, 30, 31. Fear not them which kill the Body, and are not able to kill the soul — The very hairs of your head are all numbered] Isa. 41. 10. [Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: Yea, I will help thee: yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness] See ver. 13, 14. Isa. 43. 1, 2. Fear not, for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, &c.] The Lord preserveth the way of his Saints, Prov. 2. 8.] Psalm 31. 23. [O Love the Lord all ye his Saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithfull] Psal. 97. 10. he preserveth the souls of his Saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked] Psalm 145. 18, 19, 20. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him: to all that call upon him in truth: He will fulfill the desires of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. The Lord preserveth all them that Love him: but all the wicked will be destroy.] Prov. 20. 22. [Say not, I will recompence evil: but wait on the Lord, and he will save thee.] Heb. 10. 23. He is faithfull that hath promised.]

I hope the believer will not be weary to read over all these precious promises, which are his security from God, for soul and body. I sum up all in that one, 1 Tim. 4. 8. Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.] Judge whether Godliness be the safest state. Can a man of so many promises be unsafe? But instead of these the ungodly are threatened with everlasting vengeance.

6. He is safer that hath continually a guard of Angels, as certainly all the faithful have, then he that hath none, but is a prisoner of the devil, as the ungodly are.

Hear the Scriptures, Psalm 34. 7. The Angel of the Lord encompasseth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.] Psalm 91. 11, 12. He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes: They shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.] Matth. 18. 10. [Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you that

O that you would ! Yea, if I prove that there is no man truly *Honest* in the world, that is not truly *Godly*? If you would stand to this, you would soon be changed. Indeed it is nothing but but *Dishonesty*, that we would have you changed from. And if you will not stand to this, but will refuse *Honesty* when you know it, for shame lay by the Name of *Honesty*, and wish not men to call you *Honest* any more. Either be what you would be called; or give men leave to call you as you are. Let us come then to the tryal, and see who is indeed the *Honest man*; the *Godly* or the *ungodly*.

1. I have already told you, that *God* who is the most infallible Judge, hath given his sentence on his peoples side. If you will think your selves that it is not those that *Thieves* and *Harlots* call *Honest* that are so likely to be *Honest*, as those that wise men and virtuous men call so : We have then far greater Reason to conclude, that it is not those that you call *Honest*, that are so fit to be judged such, as those that *God* calls so. How say you? will you not freely give us leave to take *Gods judgements* or *Word* before yours ? If not, we will take leave. And *God* calls all the *ungodly* by the name of *Evil* and *Wicked* men ! and the *godly* are they that he calleth *Upright*, *Good*, and *Honest*. The whole Scripture, you know, if you know any thing of it, speaketh in this language. *Luke* 8. 15. It is they that hear the *Word* and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience, that receive it into honest and good heart. This is the life that is acceptable in the sight of *God* our *Saviour*, which is [in all *Godliness* and *Honesty*.] These are inseparable, *Godliness* and *Honesty*. *1 Tim.* 2. 2, 3. Indeed the Greek word here is that which signifieth gravity and seemliness of behaviour: but that which is frequently translated [*good*] is it which signifieth the truly *Honest*. And you know none of the *ungodly* are ever called *Good* in Scripture, but clean contrary. *Prov.* 11. 6. *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them, but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.*] So vers. 18. 19, 20. [*The wicked worketh a deceitful work, but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward. As righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil, doth it to his own death. They that are of a froward heart are an abomination to the Lord: but such as are upright in their way, are his delights.*] Everywhere you see how *God* abhorreth the *ungodly*, and extolleth those that love and fear him. Christ calleth the *ungodly* [*Evil men, that out of the*

evil treasure of their hearts do bring forth evil things.] *Math. 12. 35.* All is evil ; the life evil, the heart evil, and the man evil. *Prov. 12. 26.* [The Righteous is more excellent then his neighbour, but the way of the wicked seduceth them.] And *Psalm 16.* David calleth the godly [The excellent in whom is all his delight.] It is an excellent spirit that is in them, *Dan. 3. 12. 14.* and *63.* and an excellent way in which they go, *1 Cor. 12. 31.* and an excellent knowledge which the spirits illumination causeth them to attain, *Phil. 3. 18.* *Ephes. 3. 18, 19.* You have Gods judgement of the case, if that will satisfie you, who it is that is the *Best and Honestest* man, the *Holy* or the *unholy*.

2. Do you think that man is an *Honest man*, that will deoy you your *due*, and rob you of all that is your *own*? Or rather is not the *Just* man the *Honest* man, that will give every man his *own*? I know you will give your voices for the latter. O then take heed lest you condemn your selves ! If you be not *Holy*, your own testimony doth condemn you. For it is only the *Godly* that give God his *own*, when the *ungodly* rob him of it : Hast thou not thy *Life*, and *Time*, and *Maintenance* from God? Hast thou not thy *Reason*, and thy *Affections*, and all thy *faculties* from him ? And should not all thou hast be employed for him ? Thou art a *dishonest* man that grudgeth, yea denyest him one day in seven, when thou owest him all. Thou art a *dishonest* man that givest away thy *Makers* due unto his *vilest* enemies. That wastest thy means or strength on sin : that spendest thy precious *time* on vanity : that abusest his creatures to the satisfying of thy lusts ! and that livest to thy *flesh*, when thou shouldst live to God. Thou *robbeſt* him of all which thou givest to his enemies ; and of all which thou dost not use for his service. It is leſs dishonesty to rob thy *Master* that trusteth thee with his goods, then to rob the *Lord* that trusteth thee with thy *time*, and *parts*, and all *things*. O blind unworthy sinners ! What makes you think him an *honest* man that *robbeſt* his *Maker*, or denyeth him his *own*, when you call him a *dishonest* man that *robbeſt* but fuch filly worms as you, that in respect of God have *nothing* of your *own* ? Are they better then God, that it should be called *dishonesty* to *wrong* them, and *no dishonesty* to *wrong* him, or deny him that which is his *own*? God hath an *absolute* Title to you, and that on more accounts then one. You are his *own*, as you are his creatures. *All souls are mine*, saith the *Lord*, *Ezek. 18. 4.* And tie back Title to thee

that in heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.] Heb. 1. 14. [Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to Minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? And have the wicked any such attendance for their security? No: but a fearful captivity to the Devil.

¶ Lastly, that is the *safest* state where a man is *safe* from the *Greatest Evil*. Everlasting misery is the great evil, which the Godly are initially saved from: They are *liable* to afflictions as well as others; but not to *damnation*, and therefore they are *safe*. They must be sick and die as well as others: but they shall escape *Eternal death*. Yea, they are already passed from death to life, 1 John 3. 14. and have *Eternal life* begun within them, John 17. 3. *He that hath the Son hath life:* 1 John 5. 12. [1 John 5. 22. *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death into life,*] ver. 28, 29. Marvail not at this: for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the Resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the Resurrection of damnation.] Psalm 1. 4, 5, 6. The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away: therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the Judgement, nor sinners in the Congregation of the righteous: *For the Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.*]

If yet you are unrelolved whether *Godliness* be the only way of *safety*, I dare say it is because you believe not the holy Scriptures. For there the doubt is as fully decided as any one in all the world. O how blessed is the state of the poorest most afflicted Saint, that may alway say, *My soul is safe!* If my health, or wealth, or friends be gone; yet am I safe from *everlasting misery*. Other things I shall have as God seeth best for his honour and my spiritual good: but salvation I may be sure of, if I abide in Christ.] What needs he fear, that hath escaped Hell! But O the dreadful case of the ungodly! that are passing to damnation when they never think of it! Their Bodies may be strong, their riches great, and they may fare sumptuously every day, Luke 16. 19. But O what a case are their poor souls in! and where will they be when this mirth is ended! Luke 16. 25. They are not safe from Hell one hour.

CHAP. VII.

Holiness is the only Honest Way.

WE have tryed whether the way of Godliness or Ungodliness be the *safeſt*. Let us next try which is the *Honesteſt*, of which one would think we should never meet with a man so shameless as to make a question. But experience telleth us that such there are, yea and that they are very common: Even in their reproaching of a Holy life, they will joyn the boastings of their own *Honesty*; and say, Though we swear or are drunk now and then, and make not such a stir about Gods service and our salvation, yet we are as *Honest* as these, preciser people, that make more ado, and censure us as ungodly.] As truly and wisely as if a common whore should say, [I am as *Honest* as these precise people that will not play the harlots as I do:] And as wisely as if a *Thief* should say, Though I steal for need, I am as *honest* as these precise people that will not steal.] But yet we have this advantage by these shameless boasts, that still the *Name* of *Honesty* is in credit, and the worst men honour it, by pretending to it, while they dishonour themselves by their renouncing the *Thing* it ſelf and by the impudency of their pretences.

Honesty is nothing but *true Virtue*, or the *Moral Goodness* of the *Mind* or *Action*: An *Honest man* and a *Good man*, is indeed all one: *καὶ τὸς καὶ τὸς* with the Greeks; one that is both inwardly virtuous, and manifeſts it in the cleanliness and integrity of his life, in the ſight of men. All men for ought I can perceive, would be accounted *Honest*. This reputation *Honesty* hath among its vileſt enemies, that they approve the *Name*, and would not appear to be its enemies, till they have put ſome other *Name* upon it: While they hate *Honesty*, and persecute it, they would be called *Honest men* themſelves. And therefore by the conſent of all the world, friends and foes, that is the *Beſt* way which is the *Honesteſt*:

O that you would all but stand to this, in the choosing of your course, and in your daily practice! Will you all agree upon a *Holy life*, if I prove it past all doubt to be the *Honesty*?

O that you would ! Yea, if I prove that there is no man *truly Honest* in the world, that is not *truly Godly*? If you would stand to this, you would soon be changed. Indeed it is nothing but but *Dishonesty* that we would have you changed from. And if you will not stand to this, but will refuse *Honesty* when you know it, for shame lay by the *Name of Honesty*, and wish not men to *call* you *Honest* any more. Either be what you would be *called*; or give men leave to *call* you as you are. Let us come then to the tryal, and see who is indeed the *Honest man*; the *Godly* or the *ungodly*.

1. I have already told you, that *God* who is the most infallible Judge, hath given his sentence on his peoples side. If you will think your selves that it is not those that *Thieves* and *Harlots* call *Honest* that are so likely to be *Honest*, as those that wise men and virtuous men call so : We have then far greater Reason to conclude, that it is not those that *you* call *Honest*, that are so fit to be judged such, as those that *God* calls so. How say you? will you not freely give us leave to take *Gods judgements* or *Word* before yours ? If not, we will take leave. And *God* calls all the *ungodly* by the name of *Evil* and *Wicked men* ! and the *godly* are they that he calleth *Upright*, *Good*, and *Honest*. The whole Scripture, you know, if you know any thing of it, speaketh in this language. *Luke* 8. 15. It is they that *hear the Word and keep it*, and bring forth fruit with patience, that receive it into *honest* and *good* bears. This is the life that is acceptable in the sight of *God our Saviour*, which is [in all *Godliness* and *Honesty*.] These are inseparable, *Godliness* and *Honesty*. *1 Tim.* 2. 2, 3. Indeed the Greek word here is that which signifieth gravity and seemliness of behaviour: but that which is frequently translated [*good*] is it which signifieth the *truly Honest*. And you know none of the *ungodly* are ever called *Good* in Scripture, but clean contrary. *Prov.* 11. 6. *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them, but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.*] So vers. 18, 19, 20. [*The wicked worketh a deceitful work, but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward. As righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil, doth it to his own death. They that are of a forward heart are an abomination to the Lord: but such as are upright in their way, are his delight.*] Everywhere you see how *God* abhorreth the *ungodly*, and extolleth those that *joye* and *fear him*. Christ calleth the *ungodly* [*Evil men, that out of the*

evil treasure of their hearts do bring forth evil things.] *Matth. 12. 35.* All is evil ; the life evil, the heart evil, and the man evil. *Prov. 12. 26.* [The Righteous is more excellent then his neighbour, but the way of the wicked seduceth them.] And *Psalm 16.* David calleth the godly [The excellent in whom is all his delight.] It is an excellent spirit that is in them, *Dan. 3. 12. 14.* and *63.* and an excellent way in which they go, *1 Cor. 12. 31.* and an excellent knowledge which the spirits illumination causeth them to attain, *Phil. 3. 18.* *Ephes. 3. 18, 19.* You have Gods judgement of the case, if that will satisfie you, who it is that is the *Best and Honestest* man, the *Holy* or the *unholy*.

2. Do you think that man is an *Honest man*, that will deny you your *due*, and rob you of all that is your *own*? Or rather is not the *first* man the *Honest man*, that will give every man his *own*? I know you will give your voices for the latter. O then take heed lest you condemn your selves ! If you be not *Holy*, your own testimony doth condemn you. For it is only the *Godly* that give God his *own*, when the *ungodly* rob him of it : Hast thou not thy *Life*, and *Time*, and *Maintenance* from God? Hast thou not thy *Reason*, and thy *Affections*, and all thy *faculties* from him ? And should not all thou hast be employed for him ? Thou art a *dishonest man* that grudgeth, yea denyest him one day in seven, when thou owest him all. Thou art a *dishonest man* that givest away thy *Makers* due unto his *vilest* enemies. That wastest thy means or strength on *sin* : that spendest thy precious *time* on *vanity* : that abusest his creatures to the satisfying of thy *lusts* ! and that livest to thy *flesh*, when thou shouldest live to *God*. Thou *robbeſt* him of all which thou givest to his enemies ; and of all which thou dost not use for his service. It is left *dishonesty* to rob thy *Master* that trusteth thee with his *goods*, then to rob the *Lord* that trusteth thee with thy *time*, and *parts*, and all *things*. O blind unworthy sinners ! What makes you think him an *honest man* that *robbeſt* his *Maker*, or denyeth him his *own*, when you call him a *dishonest man* that *robbeſt* but such *filly worms as you*, that in respect of *God* have *nothing of your own* ? Art thou better then *God*, that it shoule be called *dishonesty* to *wrong* *thee*, and *no dishonesty to wrong him*, or deny him that which is his *own*? *God* hath an *absolute Title* to you, and that on more *accounts* then one. You are *his own*, as you are his creatures. *All souls are mine*, saith the *Lord*, *Ezek. 18. 4.* And tie *both Title* to *thee*

thee by Redemption, as well as by Creation: For to this end Christ dyed, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living, Rom. 14. 9. We are not our own; we are bought with a price; and therefore should glorifie God in our bodies and our spirits which are his, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. For if one dyed for all, then were all dead, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that dyed for them and rose again, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. And as you your selves are Gods own as he is your Creator and Redeemer, so all that you have is his own as the beforer, or as your Master that trusteth it in your hands. Exod. 19. 5. [Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people: for all the earth is mine.] And saith God to Job, Job 41. 11. [Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.] Psalm 50. 10, 11, 12. [Every beast of the Forrest is mine: the wild beasts of the field are mine: the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.] 1 Cor. 4. 7. What hast thou which thou didst not receive? Thou hast not a minute of time which thou owest not to God, nor a thought, nor a word, nor a farthing of thy estate. And is it not the basest injustice and dishonesty to give these to thy flesh, and deny them to him, and think his service an unnecessary thing? If thou wilt give the world and thy lusts any thing, let it be that which thou canst truly call thine own. As God saith to the Idolators, Ezek. 16. 18, 19. [Thou hast set mine oyl, and mine incense before them; my meat also which I gave thee, &c.] so may he say to thee: It is his Time which thou hast consumed in idleness and in sinful delights; and his Provision by which thou hast fed thy lusts. But the sanctified man is devoted to God. His study is to give him his own. All the business of his life which you account his over-much strictness and preciseness, is nothing but his Honesty to God, in giving him his own. You look your horse should travail for you, and your Oxe should labour for you, and your servant work for you, because they are your own: And shall not we give up all that we have to God, that are much more his own? Will you hang them that take your own from you? and count them Honest that deal worse with God? Say not, If Christ were here, we would give it him. For he hath told you how you should use all his talents in his Laws; and if you deny them to the poor, or any holy use that he requireth them, you deny them unto him. Read Mat. 25. & 10. 40, 41, 42.

3. Do you think that an *unnatural man* is an *Honest man*? One that will abuse his *Father* or *Mother*, and scorn the bowels from which he sprung. All the world is agreed on it, that such are *dis-honest*: [Honour thy Father and Mother] is called the first Commandment with promise. Exod. 21. 17. [He that curseth his Father or Mother, shall surely be put to death.] See Prov. 20. 20. & 30. 17. [The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it. To be [without natural affections] is the brand of highest wickedness, Rom. 1. 31. and 2 Tim. 3. 3.

And do you not know that it is worse to be without *holy affections* to the *God that made you*, and the *Christ that bought you*? and to despise, forsake or abuse the *Lord*? Thou hadst thy *Being* more from *him* then from thy *Parents*. *They* knew not how thy parts were formed ! It was *he* that gave thee thy immortal soul : It is by *him* that thou hast lived until now, much more then on the food thou eatest, or the air thou breathest in. And art thou so *unnatural* as to be *ungodly*, and deny *him* thy love, and care, and service, that hath made thee ? and to call a *holy, heavenly life*, a *needless toy* ? Deut. 32. 6. [Do you thus require the *Lord*, O foolish people and unwise ? Is he not thy *Father* that hath bought thee ? hath he not made thee and established thee ?] If an *unholy man* be an *honest man*, that is so *unnatural* as to cross the end of his *Creation*, and deny his service to the *Lord* that made him ; then he is *honest* that spits in his *Fathers face*, and despiseth his *Mother* that brought him forth.

4. Do you think that he is an *honest man* that is *unthankful* ? It is agreed on by all the world, that *unthankfulness* is a principal point of *dis-honesty*. He is no *honest man* that will abuse or despise those by whom he liveth, or that have engaged him by kindness. If you were so used your selves, by one whose lives or estates you had preserved, would you not say, [What an *unworthy wretch* is this ! have I deserved this usage at his hand ?] Why all the *unthankfulness* against men in the world, is not to be compared to thy *unthankfulness* against *God*. What are the Benefits which *man* hath given thee in comparison of *his* ? Did ever man do any thing for thee that is comparable to thy *Creation*, and *Redemption*, and offering thee *salvation* from *everlasting misery*, and a *room with Angels in everlasting glory*? besides every hours merc-

cy that ever thou hadst here in this world. And is that an *honest* man that will requite this God with prophaneness and ungodliness, and return him *sin* for all his *mercies*, and refuse to live a holy life? Doth thy *flesh* deserve all thy care and labour, and is this God unworthy of it, and dost thou call his service a needless work? If *ingratitude* can make a man *dishonest*, thou art then a dishonest man. But it is the busines of the godly to give up themselves to him that made them, and to exercise their *thankfulness*, in their capacities, for these greatest mercies.

3. Do you think that a *cruel unmerciful* man, or a *loving and merciful* man is the *more honest*? Surely I shall here have all your voices. He that hateth those that hurt him not, and would kill them, and set their houses on fire, and carryeth malice in his face and speeches, will be called an *honest* man but by few. And he that is *Loving*, and studyeth to do *Good* to all about him, will be counted *Honest*: Why try the *ungodly* and the *Saints* by this: No more malicious men in the world then the *ungodly*. They have an *enmity* even to the God that made them, *Col. 1. 21.* and to the Christ that bought them, *Luke 19. 27.* and to the Word of God that offereth them salvation, and would lead them to eternal life, and hate the Knowledge of the way of life, *Prov. 1. 22.* They are enemies to the *servants* of the Lord, and hate the *up-right* that desire their salvation, and would but draw them from their sins, *Prov. 29. 10. & 9. 8.* They *curse* those that *bless* them, and *persecute* those that *pray* for them, *Math. 5. 44.* The first wicked man that was born into the world, did *kill his brother*, because his own works were *evil*, and his brothers *righteous*, *1. Job 3. 12.*

But this is not their greatest cruelty: They are enemies to their own *salvation*: They will run into Hell in despight of Christ and all the Preachers in the world. For there is but one way thither, the way of *ungodliness*, and that way they will go. Yea that is not all, but bloody wretches, they would have all the Countrey do as they do, and be damned with them. They are *angry* with a man, if he will not live an *ungodly* life, and ringle, and swear, and do as they: They revile him if he will not give over his diligent serving of the Lord: which is all one as to pull out with men because they will not forswit heaven, and run from God, and damn their souls, and all for *nothing*? When they make more mercifully scorn us because we will not give over cabin-

or that we will not cut our own throats: And are these cruel persons *honest* men? Is that merciless wretch an *honest man*, that is not content to cast away his *own* everlasting happiness for nothing upon his fond conceits, but must needs have others do so too? That is not content to wrong the Lord, but would have others wrong him also? The *Devil* is *Honest* if these be *Honest*.

But for the *Godly*, it is their desire, their care, their work to save themselves, and further the salvation of all others. O how they long to hear of the Conversion of Towns and Countries! and how glad are they when they hear it! Not for any worldly commodity to themselves, but because they rejoice at the good of others. And what would they not do to promote it, which they could do?

6. Do you think that a *perfidious unfaithful* man, or a *faithful* man that will not be hired to break his word, is the *honest* man? Sure this is no hard question neither. A Knight of the Post, that will say and unsay, swear and forswear, and will betray his dearest friend for a groat, is taken by few for an *honest* man, in comparison of him that will rather die then lye or be unfaithful. Why nothing is more plain, then that all you that are *ungodly*, are treacherous to the Lord himself: You are *perfidious* *Covenant-breakers*: You owe him *your selves* wholly on the grounds that I before expressed: and yet you are unfaithful to him. You have all from him, and you *serve his enemy* with it: You call him *your God*, and will not *Love*, nor *honour*, nor *serve him as your God*, *Mal. 1. 6*. You bound your selves to him in your *Baptism*, and many a time since, by a *solemn Vow* or *Covenant*: but you live in the treacherous breach of it continually. You *Covenanted* to take the *Lord for your God*; and yet you will not seek him, nor be Ruled by him. You *Covenanted* to take *Jesus for your Saviour*, and yet will not be saved by him from your sins, *Math. 1. 21*. You *Covenanted* to take the *Holy Ghost for your Sanctifier*, to purifie your hearts and lives, and yet you resist his holy motions, and hate his sanctifying word and work, and some of you will mock at *Sanctification* and the *Spirit*. And can the soul of man be guilty of greater unfaithfulness or treachery? You *Covenanted* to forsake the *flesh*, the *world*, and the *Devil*: and now you serve them more then *Christ*, and think your time is better bestowed for them, then in the service of the *Lord*! And is this

your Covenant-keeping? No Traytors, no perjured wretches, in the world are dishonest men, if these be not dishonest.

But now it is the care of godly men to keep the Covenants they have made with God. All that which you reproach them for as too much preciseness, is but the performance of their Baptisal Vow. And if you be against the keeping our Covenants with God, should you not be against the making them? Are you not ashamed to be so forward to engage your children to God in Baptism, and when you have done, would have them be ungodly, and break the Vow they make? Will you by your Profession of Christianity, and coming to the Lords Table, renew your Covenants with Christ your selves, and yet make no conscience to break them, and plead against the keeping of them? We promise Holiness, and the serving of God, and forsaking the world at every Sacrament, and whenever we promise but to be Christians: And are you for the making of abeſe promises, and yet for the breaking of them, and revilers of those that endeavour but to keep them? O fearful impudency! Is this your *Honesty*? and would you have us all as faithless and dishonest, even with God? This was the perfidiousness of the Jews, *Exodus 16. 8.* [I gave unto thee, and made a Covenant with thee; and thou becameſt mine.] We are married in Baptism to Christ, and in *Adultery* with the world, and forsaking our Husband, no dishonesty! Why then what is?

7. Moreover, do you think that a *Murderer* is an honest man? I know you will say No. Why nothing more sure then that ungodly men are *murderers* of themselves, and as I said, would undo others. They *hate their own souls*, saith God, *Prov. 29. 24.* They *destroy themselves*, *Hos. 13. 9.* There is but one way to Hell, and that they will take, and that when they are plainly told of it. Not a man in Hell, but brings himself thither. And O how many do their mocks, and performances, and evil examples keep out of Heaven, and bring to the same misery! And are these *Honesty*?

8. Do you take them to be *Honest men* that are *common cheaters*, or *deceivers*, and that in matters of greatest value? I think you do not. Why such are the ungodly: They *deceive* and are *deceived*, *2 Tim. 3. 13.* They *deserve themselves*, *Gal. 6. 3.* by thinking themselves *something* when they are *nothing*. They make them selves

selves believe that they have *Honesty* and saving grace when they have none ; and that they are in a state of safety and in the favour of God, when they are near to everlasting misery, and in Gods displeasure. And thus they *will think*, though their souls are at the stake, and the mistake be the greatest hinderance of their conversion ; and though God have plainly told them in his word, whom he will save, and whom he will not : Yet against all the plain discoveries in the Scripture, and all the Marks of death upon themselves, and the open ungodliness of their lives, and all the warnings of their teachers, they will needs believe that their state is safe, and that they may be saved without conversion ; what *wilfull self deceivers* are these ! *Their hearts are deceitful above all things*, and they *know them not*, Jer. vii. 9. And thus they are hardened by the *deceitfulness* of their own *sin*, Heb. 3. 13. *sin first deceiveth them, and to killeth them*, Rom. 7. 11. If they were not foolish and deceived, they would not scare their *lusts* and *pleasures*, Tit. 3. 3. These miserable men did never yet learn that lesson, 1 Cor. 3. 18. which one would think they should willingly learn [*Let no man deceive himself*] . They will needs think that they are Christians, and have so much Religion as will save them, when God exprely calleth the curser, sweare, raire, scorner, and all that live in *wilfull sin*, Jam. 1. 26. that [*If any man seem to be Religious and bridle not his tongue (and so for other wilfull sin) but deceiveth his own heart, saith man Religion in vain*] . And as they *Deceive themselves*, so they are *thiefes* *man cheaters* of the world. They tell them as smooth a tale as if all were *fair and right*, when they are pleading against God, and reasoning men out of their *faith* and *reason*. When *Eve* had sinned she tempted *Adam*. The drunkard will tempt others to be his companions : And so will the fornicators, and voluptuous sensualists. The ungodly will persuade those about him to be ungodly ; and when he hath not a word of solid reason to speak against the holy diligence of the Saints, a jeer of scorn shall serve to deceive instead of Reason. And if he dare not stand to what he saith to the face of a minister, or any but the ignorant that cannot think him, he will take his time, and speake when none are present that can contradict him. O how many thousands are now in misery that were cheated thither by the scoundre and carle of ungodly men ! And how many thousands have lost all hopes

of Heaven by their deceits ! Could you but ask many thousands that are now in misery, [How came you to choose so unhappy a way?] they would tell you [We were deceived by the works of wicked men ! The cavils and scorns of ignorant sinners have cheand us of our Salvation.] The very calling a diligent servant of Christ by the name of a Puritan or Precision, hath kept many a thousand even in England, from the fear and diligent serving of the Lord. And surely this is a silly argument. And are these Honest men that are the factors of Satan the great deceiver, in cheating themselves and others into Hell ?

But the Godly deal plainly with themselves and others. They are willing to know the truth of their condition, and not to make themselves believe that which God never made them believe. They promise not salvation to themselves on any lower terms then God hath promised it. They have no hope of being saved without Holiness. They set not Gods mercy against his Truth, nor the Merits of Christ against his Covenant. They know that God is better acquainted with the ways and effects of his own mercies then we are. And therefore though they hope to be saved by Gods mercy, it is by his sanctifying mercy, and not to be saved without sanctification, that is, without salvation it self and the necessary means. They know that it is abundant mercy to be saved in a way of Holiness, and desire no other saving Mercy. Yea they know that sanctification and glorification both, are greater mercy then Glorification alone, if it were possible to be alone. This is the doctrine that the Godly do believe, and this they practise, and this they teach others, and this they have learnt of God : and therefore they are no deceivers.

9. Moreover, do you think that he is an Honest man that is an enemy to the publike Good ? or rather he that is a common base factor ? The best of the Heathens thought it one of the highest parts of virtue, to be serviceable to many, and devote ourselves to the common good. But wicked men are the very plague of a land. For their sakes it is that judgements come upon us. It is they that would let in the plague of sin which would undo us. He that sets fire to the thatch, doth no worse against your towns, then wicked men that would kindle the fire of the wrath of God by their crying sins. Read the Scripture and

see who it was that caused Israel to perish in the wilderness, but unbelieving sinners. Who troubled Israel, and made them fly before their enemies, but one *Achan* & *Josh. 7*. And what but sin was the cause of their captivity, and present desolation? was it *Lot* or the *Sodomites* that brought down from heaven the fire of vengeance? Was it *Noah* or the *world of the ungodly* that brought down the flood? Are these *Honest* men that provoke God to forsake the Land, and are the *vermine and destroyers* of our peace and *happiness*? But you know that God hath promised his *bliss* to the *Godly*, and to the places where they live oftentimes for their sakes, as *Josephs case* and others tell us.

10. That man can be no *Honest* man that wanteth the very principle of *Honesty*, and that intendeth not the *End* that's necessary to make any action truly *Honest*: But such are all ungodly men.

1. The *Principle* of true *Honesty* is the *high esteem* of God and everlasting life, in our understandings, and the *belief* of Gods revelations necessary to the attaining of that life, and the *prevailing Love of God* in the heart, and the *Love of man* for his sake. Without these *Principles of Honesty*, no man can be *Honest*. How can he be an *Honest* man that *Believeth not his maker*? He that taketh *God* for a *Lyer*, hath no reason to be taken for any better himself. For would he be thought better then he takes *God* himself to be? nor can he in reason be expected to believe any man else: For none can be better then *God*. And is that an *honest* man that professeth himself a *Lyer*, and taketh all men to be so too?

And how can that be an *Honest* man, that *Loveth not God* well as his *fleſhy lusts* and *pleasures*? And this is the case of all the wicked. If they did not *Love* their *Riches* and *honour* and *ſensual pleasures* more then *God*, they would not *keep* them against his command, nor *lose* his favours rather then *lose* them, nor *seek* them more carefully then they *seek* him and his *Kingdom*, and *think* of them and *speak* of them with more delight. And certainly he that *Loveth his Riches*, or *Honours*, or *filthy sins*, better then *God* and *Heaven* it self, must needs be thought to *preferr* them before his *neareſt Friends*, or the *common good*. And is that an *Honest* man that would rather *cast off* *Father* or *Mother* then *cast off* his *filthy sins*? and that would rather *forsake* his *chiefest friend*, then *forsake* his *vices*? and would *sell* his

his friend, or the Commonwealth, for a little gain, or pleasure, even for a whore, or for drunkennes or such like things? I think you would none of you say that this were an *Honest* man, that would not leave so small a matter for the life of his friend, or for the preservation of the Commonwealth: And can you expect that he should prefer any friend before God and his Salvation? If he will sin against God, and sell his salvation for his sin, can you think he should more regard any *man*, how dear soever? There is no true Honesty in that man where the Love of God doth not command.

2. Moreover if the *Honouring and Pleading of our Lord*, and the saving of our souls be not the *End* and *principal motive* of our actions, there can be no true *Honesty*. It is essential to *Honesty* that *God* be our *End*. If you would know what a man is, first know what he *Intendeth*, and maketh the *End* and *marke* of his life: And so you must do if you would judge of his actions. The *End* is the *principal ingredient* that makes them *Good* or *Bad*. If a *Thief* Love God because he prospereth him in stealing, or because he giveth him strength and opportunity; this is a wicked *Love of God*. If a *drunkard* Love God for giving him his drink, and a *Whoremonger* Love God for strengthening him in his lust, will you call this *Honesty*? Every wicked man doth make his *sensual present pleasure* his *principal End* through all his life. If he love his neighbour, it is but *carnally*, as a dog loveth him that feedeth and stroaketh him. If he seem to be a *good Commonwealths man*, it is but for *vain-glory* or *carnal accommodate*: and he fighteth for his King or Countrey but as a dog doth for his bone. If he give to the poor, it is but that which becometh from his *Belly*; and it is either in a *common pity*, or for *vain applause*, or he thinks by it to stop the mouth of *Julius*, that God may let him alone in his sins, or save him after all his wickedness. This is no more an *Honest* man, then he that maketh a *trade of stealing*, and will *say Tythes* of all that he steals, if give some part to the Church or Poor, that God may pardon him, and save him when he hath done. All the *Riches* and all the *charity* of wicked men, is but for *themselves*: and which hath no higher *End* then *Carnal self*, is truly no *Religious Charity*: It is only the *sainted* man that is *Honest*: for he that is *devoted to God*, and doth the *works* of his life to God, and glorifie his maker. There is more *Honesty* in the *W*.

ing and drinking of the sanctified, then in the prayer and sacrifices and alms deed of the ungodly. Or else God would never have said as he hath done that [Unto the Pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and Conscience is defiled, Tit. 1. 15. And that every creature is sanctified by the word of God and by Prayer, 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. And that the prayer and the sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, and he abhoreth and loatheth them, when the prayer of the upright is his delight, Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. Isa. 1. 13. Prov. 28. 9. & 8. 7. & 11. 20. For the sanctified in their very eating and drinking do make it their end to Glorifie God, and to be fitted for his service, 1 Cor. 10. 31. But the ungodly do all, even in their duties that seem most Holy, but for a selfish carnal End. So that it is plain that he that wanteth the necessary Principles and End, that must inform an Honest mind and life, can have no Honesty of mind or life. [Now the end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned] 1 Tim. 1. 5.

But perhaps you will say, that there hath been Honesty found among Heathens: and therefore this doctrine cannot hold. To which I answer, 1. If this were true, yet it is proved, that there is no comparison between their Honesty and the true Christians. 2. But indeed, there was never true Honesty found in any ungodly man. But something that is like to Honesty they may have. Materially they may do the same outward acts that Honest men do; and this the world accounteth Honesty, that feeth not the inside, and the Ends, and therefore give the name to the Matter without the Form. And such may be Honest secundum quid, but not simpliciter. An Analogical Honesty they may have and be less dishonest than some others. And so as Robbin Wharr was called an Honest thief that would rob none but the rich, and sometimes bring a yoke of Oxen that he had stoln and give them to a poor that had none; so may a Heathen and ungodly man be Honest. But men must be Denominated (and so must their actions) according to what is predominant in them. And therefore we must say, if we will speak properly, that no ungodly man is Honest.

If you ask, *Primum, quid est nisi pax, quae fides non accommodat?* Such men, and I mean such, are without the Spirit of the world, and of the flesh.

have an *Easinity to Holiness*: And malice blinderth men, they cannot see the Good that is in those they hate. 2. Because they do *not know* what *Godliness is*, and therefore know not the *Honesty* of it appearing in its *Principles, Ends and Rule*. For it is not effectually known by any but those that have it. 3. Because all carnal men do judge after the flesh, and as they are to themselves their highest End, so they do judge of all things else according to that End. He is an *Honest man* with them, that is *for them*, and furthereth their *commodity*, or answereth their *desire*. Mark them whether they judge not those to be the *Honestest men*, that suit themselves most to *their minds and wills*, and say and do as *they* would have them. And so among *Thieves* there is none so *honest men* as *their companions*: nor among *drunkards* none so *honest* as they that will sit with them, and waste their time, and prate like *idiots* over a pot of Ale, forgetting that death and judgement are postling toward them while they sit there: And among *Harlots* their *Mates* seem *Honest*. So that *dishonest men* are no fit *Judges of Honesty*. That which is suited to their corrupt mind is best with them. And this is *their Honesty*.

By this time you may see, if you are not willfully blind, that the way of *Godliness* is the only *Honest* way: and therefore you must either be *Godly* or *Dishonest*, and pretend not any longer that you are *Honest* while you are *ungodly*: unless you will create your shame by your contradictions. The Scripture description of one that is *Honest* is, that [in *simplicity* and *godly sincerity*, not in *stately wisdom*, but by the grace of God, he hath his *conversation in the world*] 2 Cor. 1. 12. The *Honesty* which the *Gospel* teacheth, and which God will own is this, [that] *we shunning ungodliness and worldly lusts, we live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our saviour Christ*] Tit. 2. 12, 13. [and *Godly Seed*] is opposed to the fruit of *Adultery*, Mal. 2. 15. And when David lamented the decay of *Honesty* in the world, his language tells you what he took for *Honest* men, Psa. 12. 1. [Help Lord, for the *Gentiles* ceaseth: for the *faithful* fail from among the *Children of men*] and ver. 3. you may perceive what he thinks of [The *wicked* walk in every *field*, when the *wicked* are *exalted* and *I serve God with reverence and godly fear*].

empty, Heb. 12. 28. And now choose you whether you will be *Honest* or *ungodly*: but be sure that it is the *Godly* that are esteemed *Honest* and accepted by the Lord: and how ever the world judgeth, [*Knowest thou that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself*] as he tells you, Psal. 4. 3.

CHAP. VIII.

Holiness is the most Gainfull way.

WE have certainly found out already the SAFEST Way, and the HONEDEST way: We are next to enquire which way is most *Profitable*. And one would think that this should be as easily resolved as the rest. I am sure if God be wiser then men, and his holy word to be believed, the question is decided, and beyond dispute. Saith Paul, 1 Tim. 6. 5, 6. *Men corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, suppose that Gain is godliness,] or that it is better then Godliness, and therefore their Godliness to be suited to their worldly gain: [But (it is) Godliness. wish contentment which is the great Gain] Yea [Godliness is profitable to all things, having Promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.] 1 Tim. 4. 8.*

But to what end should I cite more words of Scripture, for a point which all the Scripture progetteth? It is not possible that any man can be unresolved in this, that understandeth and believeth the word of God. But yet because I see that Commodity is so much lookt after in the world, and almost all are for the *Gainful way*, as they apprehend it, and therefore its plain that *Godliness* is not *Practically believed* to be the most *gainful way* (or else men would follow it as eagerly as they do their worldly gain;) I shall therefore open to you somewhat of that *Gain* that *Godliness* doth bring; and if you can say that any other thing will prove as *gainful*, and make it *good*, then take that. But if you cannot, consider what you have to do, and do not refuse your own *Commodity*.

The first part of our *Gain*, which is the sum of all the rest, is *your self* only in whom we find strength to *you Christ*. He

have an *Eunacy to Holiness*: And malice blindech men, that they cannot see the Good that is in those they hate. 2. Because they do not know what *Godliness* is, and therefore know not the *Honesty* of it appearing in its *Principles, Ends and Rule*. For it is not effectually known by any but those that have it. 3. Because all carhal men do judge *after the flesh*; and as they are to themselves their highest End, so they do judge of all things else according to that End. He is an *Honest* man with them, that is *for them*, and furthereth their commodity, or answereth their desire. Mark them whether they judge not those to be the *Honestest* men, that suit themselves most to *their minds and wills*, and say and do as they would have them. And so among *Thieves* there is none so *honest* men as *their companions*: nor among *drunkards* none so *honest* as they that will sit with them, and waste their time, and prate like ideots over a pot of Ale, forgetting that death and judgement are postling toward them while they sit there: And among *Harlots* their *Mates* seem *Honest*. So that *dishonest* men are no fit *Judges of Honesty*. That which is suited to their corrupted mind is best with them. And this is *their Honesty*.

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Holiness, Heb. 12. 28. And now choose you whether you will be *Honest* or *ungodly*: but be sure that it is the *Godly* that are esteemed *Honest* and accepted by the Lord: and how ever the world judgeth, [*Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is Godly for himself*] as he tells you, Psal. 4. 3.

CHAP. VIII.

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But to what end should I cite more words of Scripture, for a point which all the Scripture proveth? It is not possible that any man can be unresolved in this, that understandeth and believeth the word of God. But yet because I see that *Commodity* is so much looke after in the world, and almost all are for the *Gainful way*, as they apprehend it, and therefore its plain that *Godliness* is not *Practically* believed to be the most *gainful way* (or else men would follow it as eagerly as they do their worldly gain:) I shall therefore open to you somewhat of that *Gain* that *Godliness* doth bring; and if you can say that any other world will prove as gainful, and make it good, then take that world: But if you cannot, consider what you have to do, and do not refuse your own *Commodity*.

The **poorest** part of our *Gain*, which is the sum of all the rest, is *myself* who am become *myself* through *My Christ*. His

is in Covenant with all the Saints, (Psalms 50.5.) and this is the Covenant [I will be your God, and you shall be my People.] *Jer. 7.23. Ezek. 36. 28. Jer. 11. 4. & 30. 22. Lev. 26. 43. 12. Ezek. 11. 20. & 37. 23, 27. 2 Cor. 6. 16.* He is a God to others as a King is a King to Traytors whom he will condemn: But he is a God to his People, as a King is related to his faithful subjects, and a Father to his dearest child. When he calleth himself [Our Father] he speaketh so much of his childrens Happiness, as is their admiration as well as their joy. But when he calleth himself [Our God] he speaks as much as much as can be spoken.

To be [our God] is to be [the Infinite, Power, Wisdom and Goodness engaged so as for our Good, and to be ours according to our necessity and capacity.]

This, O ye worldlings, is the Riches of the Saints! This is the Wealth that we will boldly boast of. Boast you of your houses and lands and money, and we will boast of our God. Have you Houses, and Towns and Countreys at command? Be it so: but the Saints have the God of the world, to be their God. Have you Kingdoms and Dominions? We have the God of all the earth, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Set all your Riches in the ballance against him, and try what they will prove. Set all the world, and the Kingdoms, and Glory, and Wealth of it in the ballance, and try whether they are any more to God, then one dust or feather to all the world; yea they are nothing, and less then nothing; vanity and lighter then vanity is self. *Ps. 40. 16, 17.* This one Jewel containeth all our Treasure. He is ours that hath all things: *What then can we need? Psal. 33. 1.* He is ours that knoweth all things: Who then can overreach him, or undo us by deceit? He is ours that can do all things: What then should we fear? and what power shall prevail against us? He is ours that is Goodness and Love it self: How then can we be miserable? or what imperfection can there be in our Felicity? *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means rescue his brother (nor himself) that he should live for ever and be free from corruption.* *Psalm 49. 6, 7, 9.* [But God will redeem us from the power of the grave, for he shall raise us up] *Ver. 15.* *Let the workers of iniquity be ashamed, and let them be silent.* *(Psalm 94. 11.)* *Let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent, and let us the righteous rejoice.*

upon the Lord abhorreth.] Psalm 10. 3. It is the Lord that is King for ever and ever; that beareth the desires of the humble; that prepareth our hearts, and prepareth his ear to hear. Ver. 16, 17. Our souls shall make their boast in God, Psalm. 34. 2. [O cast and see that the Lord is good! blessed is the man that trusteth in him.] But you cannot say truly [Blessed is the man that bath Lands and Lordships: Blessed is the man that bath Crowns and Kingdoms:] Yea, truly may you say, [Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord.] Jer. 17. 5. [Fear the Lord ye his Saints, for there is no want to them that fear him.] Psalm 34. 8, 9, 10. But when you have all the world, you cannot say that you have no want. Confounded then be the covetous Idolaters, that boast themselves of their Idols (Psalm 97. 7.) But in God will we boast all the day long, and praise his name for evermore. Psalm 44. 8. What have you but the gleanings of our harvest? and the crums that fall from the childrens table? Our God is he that giveth you your prosperity: He droppeth you these leavlings, from the redundancy of his Goodness, when he hath given himself, his Son and all things to his own. All that we want, and all that our souls desire, is in God. We have none in heaven but him, nor any in earth that we desire besides him, Psalm 73. 25. His loving kindness is better to us then life: Psalm 63. 3. [Our flesh and our heart fail us (and all the creatures fail us) but God is the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever.] Psalm 73. 26. Verily the Riches of all the Princes of the earth is less in comparison of him that is the Treasure and Portion of the Saints, then a straw is to all the earth, or a little dung to the shining Sun.

2. Would you yet hear more of the Riches of Believers (though more then God there cannot be) The Lord Jesus Christ is their Head and Husband; their Saviour and Intercessor at Gods right hand: They are Married to him! His Merits are theirs for all those uses to which they need them. It is he that justifieth: Who then shall condemn them? He that spared not his Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Rom. 8. 32, 34. Christ is the Pearl of infinite value, for whom we have willingly sold all. Match. 13. 44, 46. And what are all your Treasures to this Treasure? Ask him and he will tell you, that had tryed both. Phil. 3. 7, 8. His wealth cannot be told, for Christ is you, all things he accumulated

but loss and d^ruⁿg, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.] It is Love incomprehensible, surpassing knowledge, that is revealed in Christ, Eph. 3. 18, 19. The Riches of Christ are unspeakable Riches, Eph. 3. 8. It is Christ that bindeth up our broken hearts; that is the Peace-maker and Reconciler of our souls to God. What he hath done for us, and what he will do, I shall tell you anon. But the ungodly have no part in him, nor have they any such treasure, that will do for them what Christ will do for us. Their Treasure is the wrath of God, which they are heaping up against the day of Wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God, Rom. 2. 5. All the Treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ, Col. 2. 3. And he hath them for us, according to our measure: as being our Treasurie, our Head, and made of God to us: Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30. They are exceeding Riches of Grace that are shewed in the kindness of God through Jesus Christ, to all that are sanctified by that grace, Ephes. 2. 6, 7, 8. Yea, that you may see there is no comparison, even that which you abhor in a Christians case, and account his misery and the worst of Christ, is better then the best of your condition, and then that for which you lose your souls. For the very Reproach of Christ, is greater riches then the Treasures of the world, Heb. 11. 26. And it is the reproach that we undergo for Christ, that you most abhor, and the treasures of the world that you highly esteem. It is greater Riches to be one of them that are scorned and derided for the sake of Christ, then to be one of them that hath the wealth of the world at his dispose: And if the Reproach of Christ be greater Riches then all yours, What then is his Life, and Love, and Benefits? his Grace and Glory?

3. Would you have the Riches of the Saints yet further opened to you? Why the Holy Ghost is in Covenant with them as their Sanctifier and Comforter: And he is not only theirs himself, by Covenant and Relation, but he also dwelleth in them by his grace, and restoreth the image of God upon them. They are the temples of the Holy Ghost which is in them, 1 Cor. 6. 19. And by the Spirit, and by Faith, Christ dwelleth in their hearts, Ephes. 3. 17. Rom. 8. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 16. God himself doth dwell in them, and converse with them, and write his Law in their hearts, and teach them himself by this his Spirit, 2 Cor. 6. 16. Heb. 8. 10. &c. 10. &c. Elderly we know that he dwelleth in us by the Spirit which he sent

given us, 1 John 3. 24. Yea he that is joyned to the Lord, is One Spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17. For [the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.] 2 Cor. 3. 17. [We are an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ephes. 2. 22.] [Because we are sons, God hath sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, whereby we cry Abba Father, Gal. 4. 6.] By this Spirit the Saints have access unto the Father, Ephes. 2. 18. and by this it is that they are quickened to prayer and holy worship, and their infirmities are helpt, Ephes. 6. 18. Rom. 8. 11, 26. By this they fight against the flesh, and overcome it, Gal. 5. 17, 18. Rom. 8. 13. In this they live, and walk, and work, Rom. 8. 1, 5. Gal. 5. 16, 25. This Spirit is the Testimony of their Adoption, Rom. 8. 16. and the seal and earnest of their heavenly inheritance, 2 Cor. 1. 22. & 5. 5. Ephes. 4. 30. By this they are new born, John 3. 3, 6. And put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and bringing renewed in the spirit of their minds, do put on the new man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, Ephes. 4. 22, 23, 24. By the illumination of this spirit, they have a new understanding, and are brought out of darkness into the marvellous Light of Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 9. that they may know what is the hope of the Christian Vocation, and what is the Riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the Saints, Eph. 1. 18. In a word, by this Spirit their sins are mortified, their souls renewed, and made like to God, and they become a holy Priest-hood, a peculiar people unto Christ, and in this Spirit have Communion with him, Rom. 8. 13. Tit. 3. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Tit. 2. 14. 2 Cor. 13. 14. And what is all the Riches of this world, to this Heavenly Treasure, the Spirit of the Lord? They that have this Spirit, are taught by it to see light by all your Riches, and to esteem one dayes Communion with Christ, above all the Gold and Glory of this world. And that which sets the soul of man so far above Riches, is better then those Riches. As your Lands and honours do set you above the pins and points that children take for their treasure, and set as much by as you do by yours: so the Spirit of Christ and the Life of Faith, doth set the souls of true Believers a thousand fold more above your Riches, then you are above your chilidren's toyes.

If yet you see not the Riches of Saints, consider but the wordly expression, 1 Pet. 1. 4. that they [have according great precious promises given them, that by these they may be partakers of

of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.] And can there be more on earth bestowed on man, then to be made partakers of the Divine nature? As it would be a greater gift to a brute, to be made a man, and have manly Riches, then to have store of Provender suited to his brutishness; so is it greater Riches to the ungodly to be sanctified and made partakers of that nature that is called Divine by God himself, then to have provision for unmortified lusts, and to have all the contentments of a fleshly mind. It were a greater gift to an Idiot, to be made a wise and learned man, then to be furnished with feathers or sticks to play with. So is it here.

4. Every truly sanctified man, is restored from the misery that he was brought into by sin. He hath all his sins forgiven him, and is freed from the curse of the Law, by the merits of Christ, and the promise of the Gospel. For in him we have Redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. 1. 14. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Acts 13. 39. When we were dead in our sins, we were quickened with Christ, and had all our trespasses forgiven us, Col. 2. 13. Ask a wounded Conscience that groaneth under the weight of sin, and under the sense of Gods indignation, Whether forgiveness of sin be a Treasure or not? I am sure they that now are past forgiveness, and feel what sin is in the bitter fruits, would give ten thousand worlds, if they had them, for the pardon of their sins; and would account forgiveness a greater mercy then all the Riches and Kingdoms of the world. What a heavy curse did the Spirit of God pass upon Simon Magus, for thinking that money was a valuable thing to purchase the Holy Ghost with! Acts 8. 20, 21. Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased by money: Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God: repent therefore of this thy wickedness, &c. The name of Simon Magus is odious to us all; and yet I doubt that most among us exceed him in the sin for which he is thus cursed. For he thought the gift of the Holy Ghost to be better then his money, or else he would not have offered his money for it. But most men take their money to be better then the gift of the Holy Ghost. If he that would have purchased the Holy Ghost, yea a lower and less necessary gift of the spirit, was pronounced

wicked, and *cursed* with such a heavy curse ; What are they that set more by their *money* then by the *special* gift of the Holy-Ghost, yea that hate and deride it, and plead against its Sanctifying work ? The time is near when your Riches will fail you, and your prosperity die, and your sins will live ; and then there is none of you all but will say that *Pardon* and *Grace* are greater Riches then all the world.

5. Moreover, the godly have *Angels* to attend them and be their *guard*, as I have proved to you before. And are horses, and kine, and oxen, think you, greater Riches then the *Guard* and *Ministrations* of the *Angels* of God ? *Heb. 1. 14. Psalm 91. 11, 12.*

6. And surely the *very Communion* of *Saints* and *Ordinances* of *God* which in the *Church* we here enjoy, are greater Riches then all the world. We are now no more *strangers* and *foreigners*, but *fellow-Citizens* of the *Saints*, and of the *household* of *God*. *Ephes. 2. 19.* We are members of that well-tempered body ; where all the members are obliged and disposed to have the *same care* one for another, that if one suffer all suffer, and if one be honoured all rejoice, *1 Cor. 12. 25, 26.* As weak as Christians are, and as worthless in your eyes, one of their hearty spiritual prayers, and one word of their holy savoury conference, doth profit us more, then all your Treasures will ever profit you. While the *Divine* nature is in them, somewhat *Divine* will proceed from their mouthes, and be seen in their lives, which is worth more then all the Riches of the world. And O how fruitful are the *holy* *Ordinances* which we partake of, both in the *Churches Communion*, and alone in our *retirements* ! A poor Christian can get more in a Sermon which you sleep under, or deride, then you will get by your trades or livings while you live. He findeth greater Treasures in one Chapter of the *Bible*, or in one good *Book*, then you can get out of all your lands or labours. The best of your livings will not yield you so much commodity in seven years, nor in seven thousand years, if you could so long keep them, as a believing soul can get from *God* in one hours prayer, even in *secret*, where he is not by *man* observed. You do not believe this, that are ungodly : I know you do not heartily believe it ; for else you would try it, and not continue in your ungodliness. But they that try it, know it to be true. Or else what makes them continue in it, and live upon their *holy Communion* with *God* and

and his servants, more resolutely then you do on your lands and labours. Somewhat you may conjecture they find in holy duty, that makes them so instant in it as they are.

7. Another part of our commodity by Holiness, is, the Promise and Assurance of the Love of God and of our salvation ; and the Peace of Conscience that followeth hereupon. All true Believers have objective certainty : that is, the thing is certain in itself, whether they perceive it or not. And they may have subjective or Actual certainty in themselves, if they do their parts. And is not a certain Title to a Lordship or a Kingdom, a greater Treasure then the possession of a straw ? Much more is Gods Promise of Everlasting Glory, a greater Treasure then all your wealth. As Heaven is infinitely better then earth, so the Promise of God is the best security. Though we be not with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and do not yet see the face of God, yet have we a Promise that speedily we shall be there, and shall see that which they see, and enjoy all that which they enjoy. The poorest Christian hath all that in Promise under the hand of God himself, which Angels and Glorified Saints have in possession. They can shew you a better Title to Heaven, though they are unworthy in themselves, then any of you can shew to your lands or houses, in your Deeds or Leases. As poor and simple as that Godly man is whom you despise, he is an Heir of Heaven, and a fellow-Heir with Christ, Rom. 8. 17. Gal. 3. 29. Heb. 1. 14. & 11. 9. When we had the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy-Ghost, and were justified by grace, we were made the Heirs of eternal life, according to the hope that is given us by the Gospel, Tit. 3. 5,7. And God that hath given them those [Better things that accompany salvation] is my unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love, if they do not shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, and be not sloathful; but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.] Heb. 6. 9,10, 11,12. For this cause was Christ the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the Transgressions under the first Testament, they which are called may receive the Promise of the eternal inheritance. Heb. 9. 15. And we know that he is faithful that hath promised. And if your Bills, and Bonds, and Deeds, and Leases, be part of your Riches, we shall much more take the Promise of God, for our everlasting happiness in Heaven, to be far greater Riches.

8. And yet we may put this among our *Riches*, or at least as the Over-plus given us by God, that we have better advantage, even for the matters of this world, then the ungodly have. For we have a Promise that we shall lack nothing that is good for us, *Psal. 34.10.* and so have not they. We have warrant to cast all our care on God, who by promise is engaged to care for us, *1 Pet. 5. 7.* We are commanded to be (anxiously) careful for nothing, but in all things to make known our requests to God, as little children that care not for themselves, but go to their father for what they want: *Phil. 4. 6.* It is enough for us whatever we want, that our heavenly Father knoweth that we want it, *Math. 6. 32.* who hath charged us to disburden our minds of these vexatious cares, and to seek first his Kingdom and the Righteousness thereof, and promised us that other things shall be added to us, *Mat. 6. 33.* We have also a promise that all things shall work together for our good, *Rom. 8. 28.* And therefore we shall have more from the things of this life, then the ungodly have: Yea more by the want of them, then they by the possession. For if they do us good in our graces and communion with God, and in the matter of our salvation, they help us to that which is of far higher value then themselves. Poverty to a true Believer, is better then *Riches* to the ungodly that destroyeth himself by them, when the Believer is helped by his poverty. Imprisonment to *Paul* and *Silas*, was better then liberty to their persecutors. And thus in the fruits and saving benefits, all things are ours, *1 Cor. 3. 22.* We have the *Love of God* with what we possess, be it more or less, when the wicked have his wrath with it. And who would have their *Riches* on such terms?

9. Another part of the *Gain of Godliness* is, that it puts us into a Readiness to die, and a fitness to appear before the Lord. Though all the Godly have not so great a readiness as to desire to be presently dissolved, yet all of them are in a safe condition, and are so far ready, that death shall pass them into a blessed state. For we know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be delivered with our house which is from heaven: And God that hath called us the earnest of his Spirit, hath wrought in us, to be always compell'd (or at least given us cause) knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (For we walk by faith,

faith, and not by sight) we are confident I say and willing, rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 1,2, 8,9. Though the abode of the godly in the flesh is usually more needful to those about them, yet to themselves their death is gain, and therefore they have cause to desire to depart, and be with Christ, as being far better, Phil. 1.21, 23,24. For sin which is the king of death is mortified, and the curse of the Law which is the strength of it, is relaxed or nullified to us by the Gospel: so that the Believer may triumph and say, *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. and to give thanks to God that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, vers. 57. Verily I would not exchange my part (though alas too small or dark a part) in this one privilege of true Believers, for all the wealth and dominions on earth. O the face of Death will soon make the Glory of all your greatness to vanish, and the beauty of your flourishing estates to wither; and all that you now glory in, to appear as nothing. And then how glad would you be to change Portions with the holy servants of the Lord, whom you now despise! When once you hear, [Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul! and whose things are all those things that thou hast provided?] Luke 12. 20. then in a moment you will change your minds, and cry out of the world as nothing worth, and wish you had buried your hearts and hands in laying up a better treasure. This is one difference, O godly wretch, between a holy servant of God and thee! Death cannot undo him, but it will undo thee. It cannot take his Riches from him; for his God, his Christ, his Holiness, the Promises are his Riches: but it will separate thee and thy wealth for ever. It will put an end to all his troubles, and fears, and griefs: and it will put an end to all thy prosperity, and to all thy mirth, and hope, for ever. A godly man dare die; or if he ignorantly fear it, yet shall it be the end of all his fears: but thou darest not die, and yet thou must; or if thou ignorantly hope of a happiness after it, yet will it nevertheless end all thy hopes. O what a mercy is it to be ready to die!

10. But the great unspeakable Riches of the Saints is in the Life to come. We have here the Hope and the fore-taste; but it is only there that we shall have our Portion. You see what a poor Christian is according to his outward appearance. But you see not what he will be to eternity. There is the Kingdom for which we hope,

hope, and for which we run, and wait, and suffer. If God be true, and his Gospel true, then Heaven shall be the Portion of the sanctified. But if it were otherwise, then we would confess their hopes are vain : *Heaven is our Riches, or we have none.* There have we laid up all our Hopes ; and in these Hopes we will live and die, as knowing they will not make us ashamed. *Rom. 5. 5. &c. 9. 33. 1 John 2. 28.* We believe that we shall live with Christ in glory, and *shine as stars in the Firmament of our Father,* and be made like to the *Angels of God,* and shall see his face, and praise his name, and live in his everlasting Love and Joy ; For all this he himself hath promised us. *1 Thes. 4. 17, 18. Dan. 12. 3. Mat. 13. 43. Luk. 25. 36. Rev. 22. 4. Mat. 25. 21.*

And now, poor worldling, what is all your *Gain* and *Riches* in comparison of the least of these ? Do you think in your judgments that there is any comparison ? Or rather doth not sin and the world even brutifie you, and make you lay by the use of your reason, and live as if you knew not what you know ? Your *Treasure* is all visible, when *ours* is *unseen*, and therefore I may bid you bring it forth, and let us see it, whether indeed it be better then the Treasure of the Saints : Let us see what that is that is better then God, and everlasting glory ! What ! is a little fleshly ease or mirth ? a little meat, and drink, and pleasure ? a little more money, or space of ground to use then your neighbours have ; are these the things that you will change for Heaven, and prefer before the Lord that made you ? O poor miserable sinners ! Are you not told that you have *your good things here* ? but what will you have hereafter when this is gone ? *Luke 16. 25.* When your wealth is gone, and your mirth is gone, your souls are immortal, and therefore your misery and horrour will continue, and never be gone. As the wealth of the godly is *within them*, and *above* the reach of their enemies, and surer then yours, so is it the more durable, even everlasting : When all your Riches are upon the wing, even ready to be gone, and leave you in sorrow, when you are most highly valuing them, you have it now, but it is gone to morrow. [*And what is the Hope of the Hypocrite though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul ? Will God bear his try when trouble comewth upon him ? Job 27. 8, 9.* Let the words of Christ decide the Controversie, if indeed you take him for your Judge. [*Mat. 16. 24, 23, 26, 27.* If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me :]

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it : For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? For the Son of man shall come in the Glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Well sirs, you that are all for *Getting*, and for *wealth*, judge now if you have not lost your *Reason*, whether a *Holy* or *unholy*, *Heavenly* or an *Earthly* life, be the more *Profitable* way ! I would not draw you to any thing that you should lose by. If I speak not for your *Gain*, reject my words as *contemnuously* as you please. But if I do, then be not against your own *commodity*. Will such silly *Gain* as the world affords you, do so much with you as it doth : and shall not the *Heavenly* *inheritance* do more ? shall all this stir be made in the world for that which you are ready to leave behind you, and will you not lay up a *Treasure* in *heaven*, where *rust* and *moaths* corrupt not, and where you may live for ever ? *Math. 6. 20.* What profit now have all those millions of souls, that are gone from *earth*, by all the *wealth* they here possessed ! Hear sinners, and bethink you in the name of *God*. You are *leaving Earth*, and stepping into *Eternity*, and where then should you lay up your *Riches* ? Would you rather have your *Portion* where you must stay but a few days, then where you must dwell for ever ? O *Labour* not for *the meat* that *perisheth*, in comparison of *that* which endureth to *everlasting life*, which *Christ* will give you, if you will follow him, *Job. 6. 27.* Make you friends of *this* *wealth* that the world abuseth to *unrighteousness*, that when all fail below, you may be received into the *everlasting habitation*, *Luk. 16. 9.* Make not your selves a *Treasure* of *corruptible riches*, and let not your heart on *Gold* and *Silver*, lest the *rust* of *to be a witness* against you, and eat your *flesh* as it were *fire* ; and let not *get* *up* another kind of *treasure* then you dream of, against the *last* *days*. How many of you have cause to *weep* and *bow*, for your approaching *miseries*, even then when you are gloating in your *prosperity* ? *James 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* Are you for *Commodity* ? Refuse not then the best *Commodity* ! Be not enemies to them, or to those *holy* *motions*, that make for your *everlasting profit*. Take but the *Gain*, *that* *now* *for* *your* *selves*, and we are pleased. If you know any thing *more*

then God and Glory, and any riches that will endure any longer than Eternity, why do you not see it now, that we may joyn with you? But if you do not, why will you not hearken to the servants of the Lord, and joyn with them? [Wherefore, saith the Lord, do you spend money for that which is not bread: and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness: Encline your ear, come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you,] Isa 55. 2, 3. If there be not more to be gotten by Christ, and by prayer, and by the promises, and a holy life, then there is by sin, or then there is by all your friends, or lands, or trades, or care, or labour here, then take your course, and turn your back on God, and spare not. But if you are ashamed to say so, be ashamed to think so, or to live so.

Verily sirs, if the Gospel be true, you must be every man of you Saints or Miserable. Holiness is the only thriving way: Yea the only Saving way. If you forsake this way, you are while you are Gaining, and Losing by your Gains. You making Achans bargain, that by his Gold did purchase a worm of stones that dash't out his brains, Job. 7. You are running after Gehezie's gains; that thought he had got Riches, and it proved a Leprosie. You are trading with the Devil, though you see him not, and will not believe it, even as certainly as the miserable witches, that sell him their souls for a few fair promises; and when they have done, have the miserablest life of any. You are laying up but Iudas' treasures, which quickly grew too hot to hold, and too heavy for his conscience to bear: and he would fain rid his hands of it if he knew how, and because he cannot he hangs himself, and rids himself out of the ashes into the flames. O covet not such undoing gains, which you all know as sure as you breath, that you must let go. Believe but your Redeemer and you shall know, that there are greater and better things before you. Gather not stones when you may be gathering pearls. Hear me poor sinner! If God and Heaven, if Grace and Glory seem not better Riches then this world, thou judgest thy self to have no part in them.

CHAP. IX.

Holiness is the most Honourable Way.

WE are resolved if *Scripture* and *Reason* can resolve us, that Godliness is the *Safest*, the *Honestest*, and the *Gainfullest* course : I shall next shew you that it is the *Most Honourable* course. I know the *world* thinks otherwise of it. In most places it is a matter of *reproach* to be but *serious* and *diligent* in God's service. And though in *this place* and at *this time*, through the great mercy of God, it is not so with us, unless it be with here and there a *softish drunkard*, yet there are too few places that are so much freed from this plague. And it is not yet I fear forgotten of God, since the very practice of a *Godly life*, was a matter of greater *scorn* and *derision*, then to have been the *prophanest* *swearer* or *drunkard*. If a man would not have gone to the *Ale-house* with them, nor sworn, or spoke *prophanely* as did : and if he made any *serious mention* of the *Scripture*, ~~or an~~ *life to come*; if he *reproved* any *gross offender*, if he *prayed* and *instructed* his *family*, and spent the *Lords Day* in *holy exercises*, this was enough to brand him with the name of *Puritan* or *Precision*, and make him the common by-word of the town, and (let him be never so conformable to *Bishops* and *Ceremonies*) if once he went under the name of a *Puritan*, he was looked upon as *Lot in Sodom*, by the open enemies of *Piety*, who insulted over them, and lived securely in open wickedness. This is the *chiefest sin* that God hath been scourging this nation for, if I am able to understand his judgements : I know men are apt to interpret providences according to their own interests and conceits. But I take the help of the *Scripture* and the experience of former ages for my interpretation : and I am verily persuaded (not excluding other sins) that the great sin for which God hath plagued *England* by a sharp and bloody war, was the common *scorn* that was cast upon his service, it being made the *derision* of too many in the land. I never came into any place, where *meier serious diligence* for salvation, was not branded with the name of *Puritanism* and too much *Precision*, and those that abstained from iniquity were as *Owles* among them.

their neighbours, even the very wonder and the reproach of those about them. When this is made a Principle that all must hold that ever hope to be accepted with the Lord, in *Heb. 11. 6.* that he is a Rewarder of them that Diligently seek him. This is the next point in our faith, to the Believing that there is a God. And yet among us that called our selves Christians, the Diligent seeking of the Lord was so far from being thus esteemed of, that it was the surest way to make a man contemptible and odious unto many. The jealous God did long endure this horrible indignity, but would not still endure it from us. Must he make a *Holy Law* for the *Government of the world*, and shall the obeying of it be derided? Is he our *Sovereign Lord*, having by *Creation and Redemption* the right of Ruling us, and shall we scorn them that will be *Ruled by him*? Those that will not have *Christ rule over them*, will surely be *destroyed*, *Luk. 19. 27.* and shall those escape that scorn his service? *Holiness is the Image of God*, and *unholiness the Devil's image*: And when the *Image of God* is made a *scorn*, and the *Devil's image* had in *honour*, and that by them that call themselves *Christians*, was it not time for God to arise to judgement? Was it not enough that God was *frighted* by them, and his service turned out of doors, but it must be made a *by-word*? Is there but *one way* Pleasing unto God, and but *one way* that leadeth to salvation, and must that *one way* be the *common scorn*? For these things God had a *controversie* with this land; and he hath pleaded his cause with fire and sword, and spoke by a *voice* that will not be derided: he hath entered into judgement with Priests and people: He will not always support and maintain a people to deride him. Oh *England*, hadst thou none to make the *foot-ball* of thy *scorn*, but the *servants of the most High God*? Did he not tell thee that they were his *Jewels*, *Mal. 3. 1.* and that he that touched them did touch the *apple of his eye*? *Zech. 2. 8.* Will he give his son *fire* them, and will he *Glorifie* them with himself, and make them *equal to the Angels*, *Luk. 20. 36.* and didst thou think he would give thee *leave* to make them the *scorn and off-scouring of the world*? Hadst thou none to make the *foot-ball* of thy *contumacious sport*, but the *sons of God*, the *Spouse of Christ*, *you his members*, and the *heirs of heaven*? Oh foolish nation, hadst thou none to deride and make thy *by-word* but *Christ himself*? Yea, in *very Christ himself*, though thou wilt not believe

lieve it ! In as much as thou didst it to one of the least of these his Brethren, thou didst it unto him, Mat. 25. 40. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, Isa. 63. 9. and therefore in all their reproaches he was reproached. All those that were derided for Holiness, were derided upon Christ's account. If Holiness be vile and to be scorned, then God himself is vile and to be scorned, and consequently is no God : and what greater Blasphemy could be uttered by the tongue of man ? For God is Holiness it self. In us it is but a beam, from him the shining glorious Sun. If a little in us imperfect worms be hated by thee, how wouldst thou hate the perfect Holiness of God ? And if we deserve thy scorns for our obedience, (alas, our too imperfect obedience) it must fall upon him that made the Law, and gave us these commands. If he be too precise that imperfectly obeyeth God, what will you say of God himself that commandeth more then any of us all performeth ? and that chargeth us on pain of damnation to obey him. O how much wiselier would you daily do, if you daily studied, and diligently obeyed those Laws your selves ! If the Rulers of the earth would remember him that is the King of Kings, and did serve the Lord with fear, and rejoiced before him with trembling, and kist the Son to prevent his anger, and their perishing in the way, Psal. 2. 11, 12. O England ! had thy disobedient inhabitants never heard, how in their rage and imaginations would be, when they set themselves and took counsel against the Lord and his anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us ? Did they never hear that the deriders were derided by him that sitteth in the heavens, and how he will shortly speak to them in wrath, that speak against his ways in malice, and will vex them in his sore displeasure, that vex his servants for the doing of his pleasure ? Will they not believe till Hell have taught them that in despight of all his Enemies, he will set his son the King of Saints upon his holy hill of Zion ? Psal. 2. 1. to 9. Had they never heard how hard at last it will prove for them to kick against the pricks ? Act. 9. 5. And will they not know by any other means but feeling, that he will destroy those as his enemies that would not have him to reign over them, Luk. 19. 27. and that he will break them with a Rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a Potter's vessel ? Psal. 2. 9. O Scorners, did you never read his words, 2. Sam. 2. 30.

[*Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*] Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for this word shall be fulfilled upon you, and the work be wrought which you would not believe when God foretold it, and will not yet understand and believe, though it be declared to you, *Acts 13. 41.* Think not that the infirmities of the *Godly* do *justify* your contempt of *Godliness*. Think not that a *Judas* in Christ's family will *justify* you for making a *scorn* of his family, and persecuting his disciples? or that a *Cham* in the Ark, or the sin of *Noah* will warrant you to make them as bad as the destroyed world, whom God had done so much to save? Think not when you have jeered at a *Holy* life, that God will take it for a good excuse, to tell him that you had found a fault in his servants, or an hypocrite crept into his Church. He hateth their *faults* much more then you: but will you therefore hate their *goodness*? Condemn the *breaches* of his Laws and spare not; but will you therefore condemn the *keeping* of them? *O England!* if thou hadst had the grace or wit to use Christ better in his *wayes* and servants, he would have used thee better, and dealt more gently with thy inhabitants, and flames and calamities might have been prevented. Often wast thou told from 2 *Cron. 36. 14.* what it was that captivated *Israel*, and made their Priests and people to be the *Heathens* slaves [*When the Lord God sent unto them by his Prophets, because he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place, they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*] But alas, thou hast gone much further then this. *Israel* mocked the Prophets; but I remember not that it is ever said of them, that the *way of godliness* it self was made a common *scorn* among them: but still they gloried in the *Lord*, and in the *Law*, and in the *Temple*, and the *Holy Worship*. But here, if a man did but talk of heaven, or of any *holy* subject, or reprove a *swearer*, or not joyn with them in their impieties, the common cry was [*This is one of the holy Brethren: here is one of the Saints: It will never be well till we are rid of these Puritans and Precians.*] How oft have I heard almost the same words from English men, as *Lot* did from *Sodomites*, *Gen. 19. 9.* [*This one fellow came in to Sodom, and he will needs be a Judge.*] when they lived in their *bigotry*, *Insolence*, *excuse of drink*,

revellings, banquettings, and abominable prophanation of holy things, they thought it strange that we ran not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of us, but forgetting the account that their Judge was ready to require of them, 1 Pet. 4. 3, 4, 5.

Well! have you yet taken warning by the Judgements of the Lord? God hath begun to take away the reproach of Holiness, and through his great mercy to us, it is more Honourable in England then formerly it hath been. Is it Honour'd by you? Or are you hardened to perdition? Fearfull is the case of him who ever he be, that after all the gentle and terrible warnings of the Lord, dare think or speak reproachfully of a Holy life! Yet hear the calls of the Eternal Wisdom, Prov. 1. 20, 21, 22, &c. [How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and the scorners delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof.] But mercies and judgements are lost on the hard-hearted, Isa. 26. 10, 11. Let favour be shewn to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord. When the hand of the Lord is lifted up, they will not see; but they shall see and be ashamed for their envy at his people, and the enemies own fire shall devour them.] And then as they sat at nought his counsell, and would none of his reproof, but mocked them that feared God; so will he also laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. — For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord,] Prov. 1. 25, 26, 27, 29.

I will add but this one word of terror. To scorn at Holiness, is to scorn at the *Holy Ghost*, whose office or work it is to sanctifie us. As the Father hath commanded us to be *Holy* as he is *Holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 16. and made it his *Image* on us; and as the *Son* hath come to destroy unholiness, 1 John 3. 8. and give us an example of perfect holiness, and sanctifie to himself a peculiar people, Titus 2. 14. so is it the undertaken work of the *Holy Ghost*, as sent therfore from the *Father* and the *Son*, to make *Holy* all that God will save. And though I say not that it is the unpardonable Blasphemy against the *Holy Ghost* to scorn his very work and office, yet I say it is a Blasphemy against the *Holy Ghost*, to scorn that which is unpardonable, that the thoughts of it should humble all that have been guilty, and make men fear so horrible a sin. But [Blessed is he that walketh not in the counsel of the

Ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor setteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.] The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just: Surely he scorneth the scorner, but he giveth grace unto the lowly, Prov. 3. 33, 34. These are the true sayings of the Lord.

I thought not meet to pass by this necessary reproof of the contempt of Holiness, which this Land hath been so guilty of, and which hath undone so many souls, and made such desolations in the Land. And now you shall see, that I am able to make good the grounds of this reproof, and that Holiness is no Dishonourable thing.

1. The *Holy* servants of the Lord have the most Honourable Master in all the world. This only is sufficient to weigh down all the Honours of the world, if it were ten thousand worlds: When the builders of the Temple were asked their names, by the Officers of King *Darius*, Ezra 5. 10, 11. their answer was [We are the servants of the God of Heaven and Earth.] No King on Earth, no Angel in Heaven bath a more honourable Master. To be the highest Officer of the greatest Prince, is a Title as much more base then this, as man is baser then the Infinite God. If God can not put sufficient Honour on those that are Related to him, tell us, who can? When *Moses* went to *Pharaoh* for the Israelites deliverance, he was to speak in the name of the Lord, and when *Pharaoh* spake contemnuously of the Lord, as one that he knew not and would not obey, how wonderfully doth God vindicate his honour & his people! Let other men be called Knights, and Lords, and Kings, and Emperours; may I but be truly called the *servant* of the God of Heaven, I shall not envy them their honours! Our relation to so glorious a Majesty doth put an unexpressible Honour upon the poorest person and the lowest works. A servant of the Lord is more Honourable in rags, in a smoaky cottage, or the meanest state, then the Emperor of *Constantinople*, or *Tartary* is in all their Wealth and Worldly Glory. And if you think not so your selves, why do you so much honour them when they are dead? What was *Peter* and *Paul*, and the rest of the Apostles, but poor despised men in the world?

world, that travailed about to preach the Gospel? and what was their honour but to be the Holy Servants of the Lord? Yet now they are dead, you are desirous to keep Holy daws in an honourable memorial of them: and Kings and Princes reverence their names. What were the Martyrs whose memories are now so Honourable with us, but a company of hated persecuted men, that were used by others as Butchers do their beasts, and worse? But because they were the servants of the Lord, and suffered for his truth and cause, their names are honourable, and the names of their greatest persecutors do even flink. Its said of Constantine the Great (who himself was Greater by his Holiness then his Victories) that he was wont to reverencethe Bishops that had been sufferers for Christ, and kissed the place where the eye abode that one of them had lost for the Gospels sake. The Christian Princes that ruled the world, were wont to Honour the poorest mortified retired servants of Christ, that had cast off the world; as perceiving that he is more Honourable that consemneth it, then he that enjoyeth it. The nearest to God undoubtedly are the most Honourable.

2. Consider, that as it is God that the Saints are thus Related to, so their Relation is so near, and their Titles so exceeding high, which God himself hath put upon them, that it advanceth them to the greatest height of Honour, that men on earth can reasonably expect. Yea, with holy admiration we must say it, so wonderful is the Honour which the Glorious God hath put upon his poor unworthy servants, that they durst not have owned it, nor thought such Titles meet for men, if God himself had not been the Author of them! Nor could they have believed that God would so advance them, if he had not both revealed it, and given them faith to believe his revelation. As if it were not enough for us to be his servants, he calleth us his friends! Joh.15.

[Greater Love hath no man then this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you: Henceforth I call you not servants: For the servants knoweth not what his Lord doth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.] Joh. 15. 23. [Abraham was called the friend of God.] 1 Cor. 1. 22. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Tim. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

3. And they are called the Lords jewels, Mal. 3. 17.

3. They are called his *Beloved*, and *dearly Beloved*, *Deut.* 33. 12. *Psalm* 60. 5. & 127. 2. *Cant.* 2. 16. & 6. 3. & 7. 10. *Holy* and *Beloved* are inseparable. *Rom.* 4. 7. [*Beloved of God*, called to be *Saints*.] *Col.* 3. 12. [*the elect of God*, *Holy* and *Beloved*.] They are the *dearly beloved* of his *soul*, *Jer.* 12. 7. For they are accepted in the *Beloved*, *Eph.* 1. 6. Even in the *Beloved* Son in whom the *Father* is *well pleased*, *Matth.* 3. 17. & 17. 5.

4. They are called *children*, or *adopted sons*, *Gal.* 4. 6. *John* 1. 12. And he *disdaineth not* to be called *their Father*, *Heb.* 12. 9. *March.* 23. 9. *2 Cor.* 6. 18. [*I will be a Father to you*, and ye shall be my *sons* and *daughters*, saith the *Lord Almighty*.] *Mal.* 3. 17. *He will spare them*, as a man *spareth* his *son* that *serveth* him.]

5. They are called also the *Heirs of Heaven*, *Rom.* 8. 17. A more Honourable heritage then earth affords.

6. They are called a *peculiar people to the Lord*, *Tit.* 2. 14. and his *peculiar treasure*, *Exod.* 19. 5. *Psal.* 135. 4.

7. They are called *Kings and Priests to God*, *Rev.* 1. 6. They are a *chosen generation*, a *Royal Priest-hood*, a *Holy Nation*, a *peculiar people*, *1 Pet.* 2. 9.

8. The *sanctified* are called the *Spouse of Christ*, *Cant.* 4. 8. to 13. Because of the similitude of the *holy Covenant* which they make with Christ, to a *marriage Covenant*; and because of the dearness of his *love* to them, and the nearness and *sweetness* of his *Communion* with them, *Mat.* 22. 2, 4, 9. The *Lord* is said to be *married to them*, *Jer.* 3. 14. And their *Maker* calls himself *their Husband*, *Isa.* 54. 5.

9. Yea more, they are called the *Members of Christ*, *1 Cor.* 6. 15. & 12. 12. They are the *Body of Christ* and *members* in particular *vers. 27*. We are *members* of his *body*, of his *flesh*, and of his *bone*, *loved and cherished* by him, as a man doth his *own flesh*, *Ephes.* 5. 25, 28, 29, 30, 32. They are kept by the *Lord* as the *apple of his eye*, *Deut.* 32. 10. And he that *rougheth them* rougheth the *apple of his eye*, *Zech.* 2. 8. What nearness! what dearness! do those terms express!

10. Yea they are said to be *one with Christ*, *1 Cor.* 6. 17. [*He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit*.] *John* 17. 21, 22, 23. [*That they all may be one*, as thou *Father art in me*, and *I in them*, *that they also may be one in me*, *that the world may believe* this *scripture*.]

hast sent me — that they may be One, even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.] Not that they are *One* in God-head, or personality, or office with Christ, but most nearly conjoined as subjects to their Prince, that make *One Body Politick*, and as a wife to a husband, and nearer then these can express, in that they have the communications of his Spirit.

Judge now by all these wonderful Titles, whether any but an *Atheist* or *Infidel* can deny, that the *Godly* are the most *Honourable* people in the world. If it be not a contemptible thing to be the son of a King, much less to be the sons of the eternal King. Deny the Honour of those that are so nearly related to him, and you deny the Honour of God himself, and consequently deny him to be God. *Atheism* is the beginning and end of all.

3. Moreover the servants of the Lord have the most *Honourable Natures* or *Dispositions* in the world. And the Honour that ariseth from a mans *intrinsecal Disposition*, is far greater then that which accrueth to him from his *parentage*, or *Wealth*, or *Worldly greatness*, or any such *extrinsick accidents*. Many a proud and worthless person doth boast of the *Nobility* of their *Ancestors*, and tell you what blood doth run in their veins; when they have debased souls, and nothing advanced them or their *Ancestors*, but their Riches, or the pleasure of some Prince; and they know that the beggars at their doors did come from *Noah* as well as they. The *Surgeon* findeth no purer blood in their veins, then in the beggars; nor are their carkasses any more sweet or lovely; and therefore if their manners are *worse*, they are more *base* then *honest beggars*. It is the *mind* that beareth the *true stamp of Nobility*. They are the *Nobles* that have the *Nobles* souls. All the *Silks* and *Velvers* in the world, will not make an *Ape* as Honourable as a *Man*, nor an *Idiot* as a *wise man*. *Solomon* in all his *Royalty* was not cloathed like some of the flowers in the field, Mat. 6, 28. 29. and yet he was more Honourable then they. A *Corpse* may be most sumptuously adorned: A *Crown* may be set on the head of an *image*. Such as the *mind* is, such is the *man*. And that the *souls* of the *saintified* are more Nobly qualifi-ed then of other men, is easily demonstrated. For,

1. *Christ dwelleth in them by faith, and by his Spirit*, Ephel 1. 17. & 2. 22. *We are the Temples of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. The new nature of the *Saints* hath no *meaner* an Author then

the Lord himself. It is the Divine Power that giveth us all things that pertain to life and godliness, 2 Pet. 1. 3. As it is the Honourable work of God the Father to be our Creator, and of God the Son to be our Redeemer, so is it the Honourable work of God the Holy-Ghost to be our Sanctifier. And therefore as it is a Blaspheming of the Creator to vilifie the Creation ; and a Blaspheming of the Redeemer to vilifie the Redemption ; so is it a Blaspheming of the Sanctifier to vilifie Sanctification. Though I say not that it is the unpardonable Blasphemy, yet a fearful Blasphemy it is. O that those wretches knew their crime, that mock at the special work of the Holy-Ghost.

2. The new creature is illuminated with a Heavenly light, and cured of its former mortal blindness, and is brought out of darkness into marvellous light, Eph. 1. 18. Acts 26. 18. Col. 1. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 9. and is taught of God, John 6. 45. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 Joh. 2. 27. And it is more Honourable to see, then to be blind, and to live in the open Light, then in a dungeon. And it is the highest matters in the world that the gracious soul is savingly acquainted with. It is more Honourable to have the Knowledge of profoundest Sciences, then of some low and poor employment. And it is more Honourable to have the saving Knowledge of God, and of the life to come, which the poorest sanctified person hath, then to have the most admired fleshly wisdom, or all the common learning in the world. What high, and excellent, and necessary things doth Grace acquaint the Christian with ? He knoweth him that is the cause of all things else, having himself no cause : He knoweth him that is knowledge it self ; and that knoweth all things : He knoweth him that is Eternal ; that never began, and shall never end. That is Greater then the whole world : that is more glorious then the Sun : that can do all things because he is Almighty ; and yet can do no evil, because he is most Good and Holy. He knoweth him that made the world and all things, and holdeth them in the hand of his Omnipotency, and Ruleth them by his wisdom, and doth all things according to the good pleasure of his will. He knoweth him that is mans felicity, to know whom is eternal life. He knoweth the Redeemer, and the Riches of his Grace and Promises. He knoweth the diseases of his own soul, and their danger and cure. He knoweth what end he hath to aim at, and the work that he was made and Redeemed for to do : the Temptations which he must resist ; the enemies which he must

conquer, the duties which he must perform : He knoweth his Redeemers Laws and Covenants. What he commandeth, promiseth and threatneth, and to whom. He knoweth what will be hereafter ; and where he shall live when this life is ended : and what he shall do ten thousand years hence, yea unto all eternity. He knoweth what will become of all the Godly and ungodly (that die such) in the world ; and where they shall be for evermore. In a word, he knoweth whence he came, whither he is going, and which way he must go. He knoweth God as his Maker, Governour and End : He knoweth that God that he must Please, and how to Please him, and how to be saved, and to live with God for ever. This is the honourable Knowledge of the Sanctified ; which no men have but they alone. The cunning Polititians of the world have none of it, (as such). The Speculators of nature, the great Mathematicians, the Learned Doctors, famous for their skill in Languages, Philosophy, and the Theorie of Divinity, are oft without it. They have more of the words, and nations, and forms, and methods, then unlearned Saints have : but they want the Thing that these are made for. They have the signs, and the Godly have the thing signified. They have the Body of Theologie, and the Godly Christian hath the Soul. The ungodly Doctors have better skill to break the shell, but the Godly Christian only knows how to eat the kernel. The Learned may be better at the office of a Cook, to dress the meat ; but only the Godly do feed on it, and digest it. Knowledge is to be valued, (as all creatures are) according to its usefulness. As it is more Honourable to know how to Govern a Kingdom, Command an Army or Navy, or save mens lives, then to make a fiddle or an hobby-horse ; so is it ten thousand-fold more Honourable, to know how to Order our hearts and lives, and to walk with God, and obtain the everlasting Glory, then to know how to get the riches, and pleasures, and vain-glory of the present world.

3. The sanctified are made Alive to God, when other men are Dead in sin. Rom. 6. 11, 13. Eph. 2. 1, 2. And the poorest man alive is more Honourable then the carcasse of an Emperour. Eccl. 9. 4. A living dog, is better then a dead Lyon.

4. The sanctified are cleansed from the filthyness of their sins, which are the most odious defilements in the world : and they are purified by the blood and spirit of Christ. 1 John 1. 7, 9. Ephes. 5. 26. 2 Cor. 7. 1. The word of Christ hath made them clean.

John 15. 3. Their hearts are purified by faith, *Acts 15. 9.* *1 Pet. 1. 22.* *1 John 3. 3.* And therefore the most odious part of their dishonour is removed; *sin is a reproach to any people, Prov. 14. 34.* Whatever it may seem before ungodly men, it is *sin* that is your shame before the Lord: And this reproach the godly are now cleansed from. Though it be a *dishonour* to them that they *were ungodly once*, it is their honour that *now they are not such*; and that they are cloathed with the righteousness of Christ.

5. The *Holy nature* of the Saints *disposeth* their hearts, and *inclineth* their *wills* to the *highest and most Honourable things*. As in their *Knowledge*, so in their *Inclinations*, they are above the *base-ness* of the world. The *nature* of man is not to feed as beasts and horses, and dogs do: he is *above their food*; and above their converse and kind of life: that will not *content* him that *content-eth* them. And the *new nature* of a *sanctified man*, is *above* the delights and contents of the ungodly. His heart cannot endure to take up with their kind of life. To mind nothing but this world, and to have no pleasure but to the flesh, and live as an *utter stranger to God*, and not to feed on the *Heavenly delights*, and riches of the *Gospel*, but live as if there were no such things; this *sensual life* is *below* his *Inclination*, as feeding on dross, or conversing only with swine or cattle, is *below* the *nature* of a man. The *noble soul* is that which is *inclined to the noblest objects*: even to *God*, and *Holiness*, and *everlasting life*: and cannot endure the *poor*, and *low*, and *fordid life* of men, that have their portion here. *Psalm 17. 14.* Nothing that is *corporeal*, or *transitory*, yea nothing *below* *God*, can *satisfie* a *holy soul*. It is this *Holy Disposition*, that fits men for *holy Duties*: and that is their *fitness* for *eternal Happiness*. If *Angels* were not *Holyer* than *Devils*, and *godly men* than the *ungodly*, *Heaven* could *not* hold them, nor could they any more see or enjoy the *Lord*, than they that are cast into *outer darkness*. And therefore if you dare say that the *Holy* are no more *Honourable* than the *unholy*, you must say that the *Holy Angels* are no more *Honourable* than the *devils*: which sure you will scarce be so *desperate* as to *speculate*.

6. Holiness in the godly is the *Image of God*, in which we were created: and according to which we are renewed by the *Holy Ghost*. *Eph. 4. 24.* *Col. 3. 10.* *Gen. 1. 27.* And *none* can be spoken more *Honourable* of a creature, than that he hath his *Master's Image*, unless as to the *Degree*, that *some* have *more* of it

then others. It is the honourable Title of the Son himself, that he [*is the Brightness of his Fathers glory, and the express image of his person*] This is above the honour of any, or of all the Saints. But to have the Image of God in Wisdom, and Holiness, as all have that are sanctified, is a wonderful dignity to be given to a creature, and so low and unworthy creatures as we are. His commands tell us what are the qualifications of his people. [*As he which hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy, in all manner of conversation: For it is written, Be ye Holy, for I am Holy.*] 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. And how high a command, and strait a Rule is that, given us by Christ, Matth. 5. 48. [*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect!*] Well may it be called an exceeding Righteousness, surpassing the Scribes and Pharisees, which all have that enter into the Heavenly Kingdom, Matth. 5. 20. There is nothing under Heaven, that is known to man so like to God, as a *Holy soul*. Remember this the next time you reproach such. All you that are the Serpents seed, remember when you spit your venome against Holiness, that it is the *Image of God* that your enmity is exercised against. O what a strange conjunction of malignity and hypocrisy appeareth in the enemies of God among us! A picture of Christ that is drawn by a Painter, or a forbidden Image of God that is carved by an Image-maker in stone, that hath nothing but the *name of an Image of God*, these they will reverence, and honour, (though God hath forbidden them to make such Images of him) The Papists will ~~say~~ before them, and the prophanes among us are zealous for them: when in the mean time they hate the *noblest Images* of God on earth. *Forbidden Images* of God have been defended, by seeking the *blood* of his *truest Images*. Do you indeed Love and Honour the *Image of God*? Why then do you hate them, and seek to destroy them? And why do you make them the scorn of your continual malice? Can you blow hot and cold? Can you both *Love* and *Hate*, both *Honour* and *Scorn*, the *Image of God*? Search the Scripture, and see whether it be not the sanctified, heavenly, diligent servants of the Lord that are the *Honourable Image* which he owneth, and magnifieth, and glorieth in before the world. If this be not true, then go on in your hatred of them and spare not. These are not *Images of stone*, but of *Spirits*: not *Images* made by a *Carver* or a *Painter*, but by the *Holy Ghost* himself: Not hanged upon a wall for men to look on, but *living Images*,

Images, actuated from Heaven, by spiritual influence from Christ their head, and shining forth in exemplary lives to the honour of their Father whom they resemble, *Math. 5. 16.* It is not in an outward shape, but in spiritual wisdom, and Love, and Holiness of heart and life, that they resemble their Creatour. Whether you will believe it now or not, be sure of it, you malignant enemies of Holiness, that God would shortly make you know it, that you chose out the most excellent Image of your maker under Heaven, to pour out your hatred and contempt against. And in as much as you did it to his noblest Image, you did it unto him.

7. If all this be not enough to shew you the Honourable Nature of Holiness, I will speak the highest word that can be spoken of any created nature under heaven, and yet no more then God hath spoken ; even in *2 Pet. 1. 4.* where it is expressly said, that the Godly are [partakers of the Divine Nature.] I know that it is not the *Essence of God* that is here called the *Divine Nature* that we partake of : we abhor the thoughts of such blasphemous arrogancy, as if that grace did make men Gods. But its called the *Divine nature*, in that it is caused by the *Spirit of God*, and floweth from him, as the Light or sunshine floweth from the sun. You use to say, *the sun is in the house*, when it shineth in the house, though the sun it self be in the firmament : so the Scripture saith that God dwelleth in us, and Christ and the spirit dwelleth in us, when the Heavenly Light and Love and Life, which streameth from him dwelleth in us ; and this is called the Divine Nature. Think of this, and tell me whether higher and more Honourable things can easily be spoken of the sons of men, *1 Job. 4. 16.* [*God is Love* ; and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him.] O wonderful advancement ! high expressions of a creatures dignity ! Blessed be that Eternal Love that is thus communicative, and hath so enabled our unworthy souls : with what alacrity and delight should we exalt his name by daily praises that thus exalteth us by his unspeakable mercies *Psal. 75. 10. & 89. 16, 17.* [*Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound : they shall walk O Lord in the light of thy countenance : In thy name shall they rejoice all the day : and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted : For thou art the glory of our strength ; and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted : For the Lord is our defencer, and the holy one of Israel is our King.*]

psal. 148. 13, 14. [Let them praise the name of the Lord : for his Name alone is excellent : his Glory is above the Earth and Heavens : He also exalteth the horn of his people ; the Praise of all his Saints.] He hath first exalted our blessed Head, even highly exalted him by his own right hand, and given him a name above every name, Act. 2. 33. & 5. 31. Phil. 2. 9. and with him he hath wonderfully exalted all his sanctified ones, Heb. 2. 10. 11. For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to Glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings : For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified, are all of One : for which cause he is not ashamed to call them Brethren.] 1 Cor. 12. 12. [For as the Body is One, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body : so also is Christ.] What greater honour can man on earth be advanced to ? And the Honour of the just is communicative to the societies of which they are members. The Churches are called Holy for their sakes. [Prov. 11. 11. By the blessing of the upright the City is exalted : but is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked] Prov. 14. 34. [Righteousness exalteth a nation : but sin is a reproach to any people] Let therefore both the persons and Congregations of the Saints continually exalt the name of God : [O Bless the Lord for ever and ever, and blessed be his glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.] Neh. 9. 5. [The Lord liveth : and blessed be our Rock : and exalted be the God of our Rock of our salvation.] 2 Sam. 22. 47. [Psal. 30. 1. I will extoll thee O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up.] Psal. 27. 6. [And now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me : therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy ; I will sing, yea I will sing praises unto the Lord.] Psal. 28. 8, 9. [The Lord is their strength, the saving strength of his anointed : He will save his people, and bless his inheritance, and feed them also, and lift them up for ever.] Psal. 147. 6. The Lord lifteth up the meek, and casteth the wicked down to the ground.] Thus shall it be done to them whom God doth delight to Honour. He will Deliver them and Honour them. Psal. 91. 15.

4. And as the sanctified have the most Honorable dispositions, so have they the highest and most Honorable Designs. The End of their lives is incomparably above other mens. The rest of the world (though they may talk of Heaven, and wish for it rather than

then Hell, when they can live no longer) do indeed drive on no greater trade, then providing for the flesh, and feathering them a nest which will quickly be pulled down: and like the spider, spinning themselves a web, which death will shortly sweep away. But the Design and daily busines of the Godly is for everlasting Glory. *Heb. 11. 10. They look for a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*] vers. 13, 14, 15, 16. *They confess themselves strangers and pilgrims on earth, thereby declaring that they seek a Country.* And truly if they were mindful of that (deceitful world) which they came out of (and have forsaken) they may have opportunities (and too many invitations) to return to it: But now they desire a better Country, that is, an Heavenly: Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called Their God: for he hath prepared for them a City] This Noble End ennobles both the persons and conversations of believers. To Rule a Kingdom is a Nobler design then to play with children for pins or points. But to seek the Everlasting Kingdom is far above all the highest designs that are terminated upon earth. If Everlasting Glory with God in Heaven, be a nobler state then a worldly life, then must the seeking it be a nobler design. Paul sheweth you the difference very pathetically, *Phil. 3. 18, 19, 20.* [For many walk (of whom I told you often, and now tell you weeping) that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ; Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things: But our Conversation is in Heaven] that is, we live as Citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, and not as those that are here at home. It is Heaven that sanctified persons mind; that they study and care for, and labour and live for in the world. And therefore, though in their *Natural capacity*, they are but as other men, yet in their Moral and Relative capacity, I think I may say without Hyperbole, that they are much more advanced above the dignity of the great unsanctified Princes upon earth, then Reason, and learning. And manly designs advance a man above a beast. It is the Nobleness and baseness of the end that doth honour or abase the agent: and therefore none are truly Honourable but those that seek the spiritual, the high, eternal Honour.

5. The Employment as well as the Designs of the Godly, do prove them to be the most Honourable. Both the End and Manner do shew the excellency of their Work. As the End Honoureth

Honoureth the person, so doth it Honour all the works that are Means thereto. The first thoughts of a Godly man when he awaketh, and the last when he lyeth down (if he observe his Rule) are usually for Heaven. When you are conversing with worldly men, about these common worldly things, they are in prayer or holy meditation conversing with God, about the matters of his service and their salvation. Their hearts are toward him: their thoughts are on him: They are devoted to him: Their daily business is to serve him. [When I awake (saith David, Psal. 139. 28.) I am still with thee.] Psal. 16. 7. 8. [I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.] The life of the Godly is called in Scripture [a walking with God] such was the course of *Henock, Noah, and Abraham, Gen. 5. 22, 24. & 6. 9. & 17. 1. & 24. 40.* They walked before God, Gen. 48. 15. and in his ways, Deut. 28. 9. They love the Lord their God with all their heart and soul (as to the sincerity of it:) and walk after him, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and serve him and cleave unto him, Deut. 13. 3, 4. And can an inhabitant of this world have a more honourable imployment then to serve the Lord? and a more honourable task then to walk with God? Should we not have thought such words intolerable to be used of the best on earth, if God had not been himself the author of them, and put them into our mouths? Hear more of his own expressions concerning the conversations of his servants [1 Cor. 1. 9. God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ] 1 Job. 1. 3. [And truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ] By [fellowship] is not meant here [a society of equals.] God forbid we should think so blasphemously: But it is a Communion of the beloved sanctified Creature with his blessed Creator, agreeable to his distance. In their secret addresses, his servants have communion with him: Their Prayer is nothing else but a humble speaking to the living God, for the supply of all their wants. In their Praises and Thanksgivings it is God that they deal with: and the words of their mouths and the meditation of their hearts, are acceptable in the sight of their Redeemer, Psal. 19. 14. They pour out their souls before him: and he openeth his ears and his bosom unto

unto them, Psal. 62. 8. & 10. 17. [*He will feed his flock like a shepherd : he will gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*] Isa. 40. 11. And in the publick Worship of God in the holy Assemblies, his servants also have communion with him : It is him that they hear whoever be the messenger : It is him that they adore, and praise and magnifie [*Come (say they) and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord : to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his wayes, and we will walk in his paths — Come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord*] Isaiah 2. 3, 5. [*We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy Temple*] Psalm 48. 9. [*In his Temple doth every man speak of his glory.*] Psalm 29.9. Yea, the common employments of the Godly are sanctified, and thereby advanced above the highest actions of the wicked. For it is God and Glory that is in all their ultimate End. [*Whether they eat or drink, or what ever they do, they do it to his glory,* 1 Cor. 10. 31. That is, They intend his Glory as their end, and they do it in reverent obedience to his Will, and in a holy manner behaving themselves as may honour him whose work they do. And he that hath the face to say, that Prayer, Praise, Thanksgiving, Meditation, holy conference and other works of Holiness and Righteousness, are not a more Honourable employment then the sordid drudgery of the world, must say also that the life of a worldling is more Honourable then the life of the holy Angels and the heavenly host. They are obeying and praising God, and living in the sense of his dearest love, while you are sinning and scraping in this Earth. And can you believe that your life is more Honourable then theirs? If not; you must confess, that the Godly that come nearest the work of Angels, do live a more Honourable life then you. When Christ called Peter to leave his fishing and follow him and be his servant, he tells him that he will make him a *fisher of men* : as intimating that it was a more honourable work to *catch souls* by the Gospel, and *win them to God and to salvation*, then to *catch fishes*. To please God and save our souls, and further others in obeying him to their salvation, is the Highest work that the sons of men are capable of while they live in flesh.

As the Priests were sanctified to draw nearer unto God, then the common people, and to be employed in his most Holy service,

so are the godly separated by grace from the ungodly world, and brought nearer God, and used by him in the noblest works.

[In a great house there are not only vessels of Gold and of Silver, but also of wood, and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour.] 1 Tim. 2. 20. [If a man therefore purge himself from sin, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the masters use, and prepared unto every good work.] Ver. 21. The Vessel that Swine are fed in, is not so Honourable as that which is used at a Princes table. If you would know what use the Godly are employed in, read 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9.

[As lively stones they are built up a spiritual house: they are a holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God, which shall be acceptable by Jesus Christ. They are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood an holy Nation, a peculiar people that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light:] The holy Scriptures tell you the work of Saints: Compare them with the work of the drunkard, the glutton, the gamester, the fornicator, or the covetous or ambitious worldling, and let your reason tell you which is the more Honourable, Psalm 34. 9. [O fear the Lord ye his Saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.] Psal. 31. 23. [O Love the Lord all ye his Saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful.] Psal. 89. 5, 7. [The heavens shall praise thy wonders O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the Congregation of the Saints. God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of the Saints: and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.] These are the employments of the Saints.

6. Moreover, the Godly have the most Honourable entertainment by the God of all the world. They are bid welcome when others are rejected. The door is opened to them that is shut against the wicked. They are familiar with Jesus Christ, as the children of the family, when others are strangers whom he will not know. Can. 5. 1. Matth. 25. 10. Matth. 7. 23. [I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye workers of iniquity.] Psalm 1. 6. [For the Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.] The faithful are feasted by him, when the rest are examined with a [Friend, how comest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness,] Matth. 22. 12, 13. They are called the children that have the bread, and the rest are called.

called the dogs ; of which some are without , and those within do feed but on the crums that fall from the childrens table , Matth. 15. 26, 27. Revel. 22. 15. Hear the Lords invitation and his promise : Isa. 55. 2, 3. [Hearken diligently unto me , and eat ye that which is good ; and let your soul delight it self in fatness ; Encline your ear , and come unto me , hear and your soul shall live , and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you .] Who is it that is admitted into the Tabernacle of the Lord , and who shall dwell in his holy hill ? He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness , and speaketh the truth in his heart . — In whose eyes a vile person is condemned , but he honoureth them that fear the Lord , Psalm 15. 1, 2, 4. The upright shall dwell in the presence of the Lord .] Psalm 140. 13. [God will save Zion , — and the seed of his servants shall inherit it , and they that love his name shall dwell therein .] Psal. 69. 35, 36. And [Blessed is the man whom thou choosest , O Lord , and cansest to approach unto thee , that he may dwell in thy Courts : he shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy House , even of thy holy Temple .] Psal. 65. 4. Saith David [Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land , that they may dwell with me : he that walketh in a perfect way , he shall serve me .] Yea , Christ entertaineth faithful souls with a spiritual feast of his own flesh and blood . His flesh to them is meat indeed , and his blood is drink indeed , John 6. 55. and he that eateth and drinketh these , shall live for ever , Verse 54, 56. The returning Prodigal is met with joy , and quickly embraced in his Fathers arms ; the fatted Calf is killed for him : a ring and new apparell is provided him : and musick must express the Joy for his recovery , Luke 15. O how welcome are converted sinners to the God of mercy ? And as they are welcome at their first return , so are they in all their attendance on him , and addresses to him , and service of him , while they continue in his family . They have boldness now to enter into the Holiest , by the new and living way that is consecrated : and are invited to draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith , Heb. 10. 19, 22. [In Christ we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him .] Ephel. 3. 12. And God hath made us accepted in the beloved , to the praise of the glory of his grace , Ephes. 1. 6. We are living sacrifices , acceptable unto God , Rom. 12. 1. And our services , though weak , are sacrifices acceptable and well-pleasing to him , Phil. 4. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 3. & 3. 4.

when the prayers of the wicked are abhorred of the Lord; his people serve him acceptably in reverence and godly fear, *Heb. 12. 28.* He answereth their prayers, and often speaketh peace unto them, and signifieth his acceptance of them. If they could bring him a house full of Gold and Silver, they would not be so welcome to him as they are in bringing him their hearts, their bumbled hearts, their broken, tender, melted hearts, that burn in Love to him, and flame up towards him in desires and in holy praise. [To this man will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my Word] *Isa. 66. 2.* This is the Honourable entertainment of the Saints.

7. And they are members of the most Honourable Society in the world. The Church is the *Kingdom of Jesus Christ, Luke 1. 33. Col. 1. 13. The Kingdom of God, Luke 17. 21. & 18. 17. The Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 3. 2. & 13. 31, 33, 44.* It is the *School of Christ, or his University, in which Believers are his Scholars, learning to know him, and serve him, and praise him for ever, and trained up for everlasting life, Acts 11. 26. Luke 6. 13. Mat. 3. 1, 2, &c.* It is the *family or household of God, Eph. 2. 19. 1 Tim. 3. 15. Heb. 10. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 17.* It is the *Sponse, yea the Body of Christ, Eph. 5. 25.* So loved by him, that he gave himself for it, becoming the price of our Redemption, and thought not his life too dear a Ransom, nor his blood too precious to cleanse and save us, *Eph. 5. 25, 26. Tit. 2. 14.* The Church, which every godly man is a living member of, is a Society chosen out of the world, to be nearest unto God, and dearest to him, as the beloved of his soul; to receive the choicest of his mercies, and be adorned with the righteousness of Christ, and to be employed in his special service, *1 Pet. 2. 4, 5, 9. John 15. 19. Eph. 1. 4. Psalm 132. 13. & 135. 4. Eph. 5. 1.* The Lord that Redeemed them is their *King and Head, and dwelleth in the midst of them, and walketh among them, as the people of his special presence and delight, Psalm 2. 6. & 89. 18. & 149. 2. & 46. 5. Isa. 12. 6. Jer. 14. 9. Zeph. 3. 5, 15, 17. Rev. 1. 13. & 2. 1. Psalm 95. 2.* The Church is a *Heavenly Society, though the militant part yet live on earth: For the God of Heaven is the Sovereign and the Father of it: The glorified Redeemer is their Head: The Spirit of Christ doth guide and animate them: His Laws revealed and confirmed from Heaven, direct and govern them: Heaven is their end; and heavenly are their dispositions, employ-*

employments and conversations : There is their portion and treasure, *Matth. 6. 20, 21.* and there is their very heart and hope. They are risen with Christ, and therefore seek the things that are above : For their life is hid with Christ in God, *Col. 3. 2, 3, 4.* Their Root is there : and the noblest part of the Society is there : For the glorified Saints, and in some sort the Angels, are of the same Society with us ; though they are in heaven and we on earth. The whole family in Heaven and earth is named from one and the same Head, *Eph. 3. 15.* [*Heb. 12. 22, 23. 24.* We are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the General Assembly and Church of the first born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of Sprinkling, &c.] This is the Honourable Society of Saints : the eye, the pearl of the whole Creation.

8. Moreover, the Godly have the most Honourable Attendance. The creatures are all theirs : though not in point of Civil property, yet as means appointed and managed by God their Father, for their best advantage. The Angels of God are ministering spirits for them : not as our servants, but as Gods servants for our good. As Ministers in the Church are not the servants of men, but the servants of God for men : And so whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or to come, all are ours.] *1 Cor. 3. 22.* The Shepherds servant is not the servant of the sheep, but for the sheep. And so the Angels disdain not to serve God, in the guarding of the weakest Saints. As I formerly shewed from *Heb. 1. 14.* & *Psalm 91. 11, 12.* & *34. 7.* [*The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. For he giveth his Angels charge over us, to keep us in all our wayes : they shall bear us upon their hands, lest we dash our foot against a stone.*] Sun and Moon, and all the creatures, are daily employed in our attendance. O how wonderful is the Love of God to his unworthy servants, in their advancement ! Remember it, when thou art scorning at the servants of the Lord, or speaking against them, that those poor, those weak despised Christians, that thou art vilifying, have their Angels besholding the face of God their Father in the Heavens : Take heed therefore that you despise not the least of these. It is the warning of

Christ, *Matth. 18. 10.* The same blessed spirits that attend the Lord, and see his face in blissful Glory, do attend and guard the meanest of the godly here on earth. As the same servants use to wait upon the Father and the children, in the same family, or the bigger children to help the less.

9. And it is the *Honour* of the *Godly*, that they that are themselves most *Honourable*, do *Honour* them. To be magnified by a fool, or wicked flatterer, is small Honour : but to be magnified by the best and wisest men, this is true Honour. We say that *Honour* is in him that giveth it, and not in him that receiveth. But it is God himself that Honourereth his Saints: It is he that speaketh all these great and wonderous things of them which I have hitherto recited. Search the Texts which I have alledged, and try whether it be not he. And surely to have the God of Heaven to applaud a man, and put Honour upon him, and so great Honour, is more then if all the world had done it. Yet we may add, (if any thing could be considerable that is added unto the approbation of God) that all his servants, the wisest, and the best, even his holy Angels, are of the same mind, and honour the godly in conformity to their Lord.

And here Christian, I require thee from the Lord, to consider the greatness of thy sin and folly, when thou art too desirous of the applause of men, especially of the blind ungodly world ; and when thou makest a great matter of their contempt or scorn, or of their slanderous censures. What ! is the approbation of the eternal God so small a matter in thy eyes, that the scorn of a fool can weigh it down, or move the ballance with thee ? If a feather were put into the scales against a mountain, or the whole earth, it should weigh as much as the esteem or dis-esteem of men, their honouring thee, or dishonouring thee, should weigh against the esteem of God, and the honour or dishonour that he puts upon thee, (as to any regard of the thing it self ; though as it reflecteth on God, thou maist regard it.) He is the wise man that God calls wise : and he is the fool that God calls fool : (and that is every one that *layeth up riches for himself*, and *spareth not* towards God, *Luke 12. 20, 21.*) He is the Happy man that God calls Happy ; and he is a miserable man that God calleth miserable : and who those are, you may see in *Psalm 1.* and many Scriptures before-cited. Hear the words (and you that are Believers, *lay up the blessed promise*) of Christ himself, *John 12. 26.*

[If any man serve me, him will my Father Honour.] And who cares then for the dishonours of all the wicked of the world ? Our tryed faith as precious far then Gold, will be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.] 1 Pet. 1. 7. See 2 Tim. 2. 21. We must learn therefore to imitate our Lord, John 5. 41. and not to receive our Honour from men ; and not to imitate the wicked, vers. 44. that receive Honour one of another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God. There is enough for us in Gods approbation. And yet all his servants do imitate their Lord ; and his Judgement is their Judgement ; and whom he honoureth, them do they honour ; Angels, and Saints, and all that enter into the Tabernacle of the Lord, do contemn the viles, and honour them that fear the Lord, Psalm 85. 4. And though no mans Judgement or Praise be valuable in comparison of the Lords ; yet the Honour and Praise that is given by the wise and Godly, is more then a thousand times as much from ignorant ungodly men. If the Athenian Orator regarded the censure of Socrates more then of all the rest of his auditors, we have cause to judge he Elogies of experienced holy men a greater honour then of thousands of the wicked, & greater then all their contempt or scorn is able to weigh down. The applause of the wicked is oftentimes a dishonour in wise mens eyes. Was it not Balaams chiefeſt honour to hear from Baluk, [I thought to promote thee to great Honours, but the Lord hath kept thee back from Honour.] Numb. 24. 11. The Honour that God keepeth a man from, is no Honour : but it is an Honour to be kept from such Honour by the Lord : Innocent poverty is incomparably more Honourable then Riches by iniquity, which is the greatest shame.

10. Lastly it is unspeakable everlasting Honour that holiness doth find unto, and which holy men shall enjoy with God. The very Relation of a Godly man to his everlasting Glory, is an Honour ten thousand times surpassing the Honour of all the Kingdoms of the world. If you did but know that one of your poor neighbours should certainly be a King, would you not presently honour him, even in his rags ? You may know that the Saints shall reign with Christ, as sure as if an Angel from heaven had tol'd you so, and more ; and therefore how should a Saint be honoured ? If God had but legibly marked out some among you for salvation, and written in their fore-heads, [This man shall be saved] Would not all the Parish reverence that man ? Whys Heavenly mind,

mind, and the Love of God, and self-denial, and holy obedience, are Heaven-marks infallible, as true as the Gospel, and written by the same hand as the Gospel was, I mean by the Spirit of God himself : If a voice from Heaven should speak now of any person in the Congregation, and say, [*This man shall reign in Heaven for ever*] would it not be an Honour above all your worldly Honours ? Why Holiness is Gods Image, and the Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, and beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God, and we have the promise, and seals, and oath of God for our confirmed certainty ; yea and the Knowledge of God in Christ is the beginning of eternal life, *John 17. 3.* and what would we have more ? The presence of Christ in a little of his Glory upon the Mount, transported the three Disciples : And the glimpse of the Glory of God which *Moses* saw, did make his face shine that the Israelites could not behold it. The approaches of the Saints to God in holy Worship here on earth, are exceeding Honourable, because they participate of heaven, and it is upward that they look: *1 Chron. 16.27.* [*Glory and Honour are in his presence : strength and gladness are in his place.*] The soul that is beholding God by faith, and conversing with the Heavenly inhabitants, is quite above all earthly things : and as Angels are more honourable then men, and Heaven then Earth, so are Believers that converse in Heaven with Angels, yea with Christ himself by faith, more honourable then terrestrial carnal men.

But the great Honour is behind ; yet near at hand ; when the promised Crown is set upon their heads : O mark the Honour that is promised them by the Lord of truth. The soul it self before the Resurrection of the body, shall be with Christ, *Phil. 1.23.* Even present with the Lord, *2 Cor. 5. 1. 8. John 12. 26.* [*If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be.*] And at the Resurrection Christ that hath loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctifie and cleanse it — will present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish, *Eph. 5. 25, 26.* Will they not be Honourable even in the eyes of the ungodly world, when they hear the sentence of their Lord, [*Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Mar. 25. 34.*] and ver. 23. [*Enter ye into the joy of thy Lord :*] [*When*

[When Christ shall come to be Glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.] 2 Thes. 1. 10. Mark here, that it is one end of the coming of Christ, to be Glorified and admired in his Saints. [Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.] Jud. 14. 15. Our hearts shall be established unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints.] 1 Thes. 3. 12, 13. we shall then praise him [that hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us Kings and Priests to God,] Rev. 1. 5, 6. He that overcometh shall be clothed with white rayment, and confessed by Christ before the Father and the Angels of heaven, Rev. 3. 5. Yea he shall be a Pillar in the Temple of God, and go out no more: and Christ will write on him the Name of God, and the name of the City of God, New Hierusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from God, and his own name, vers. 12. Yea he will grant to him to sit with him in his throne, as he himself hath overcome and is set down with the Father in his Throne: vers. 21. And he will honour his Saints to be Judges of Angels, and of the world, 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. And they that overcome and keep his Words unto the end, to them will he give power over the nations, and they shall rule with a rod of iron, and break them to shivers as the vessels of a potter, even as Christ received of his Father: and he will give them the morning star, Rev. 2. 26, 27. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear the Glorious things that are promised to the Saints. The high praises of God shall be in their mouths, and the two-edged sword in their hands — to execute on the wicked the Judgements written, such Honour have all his Saints, Psal. 149. 6, 9. Then shall we hear the praises of the Heavenly society saying, [We give thee thanks O Lord God Almighty which art and was, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned, and the Nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the Prophets and to the Saints and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that dwell on the earth.] Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their

their Father: Who hathears re-bear, let him bear, Matth. 13. 43.] Yea, [they shall be equal to the Angels of God, Luk. 20. 36.] This is the Inheritance of the Saints in Light of which God is now making us Meet to be partakers, Col. 1. 12. If [all that sat in the Council against him, saw Stevens face as it had been the face of an Angel] Act. 6. 15. what shall be the glory of the Saints when themselves shall see the face of God, and his name shall be written in their foreheads, Rev. 22. 4. when the ungodly world shall know, that Holiness was the most Honourable State?

But perhaps some will say, that [this language will make us Proud: To tell men that they are the most Honourable persons in the world, is the way to make them the Proudest persons.]

To which I give you a manifold answer that your Objection may not have the least pretence that it is justified.

1. *Worldly Honours* are of a more swelling nature than *Heavenly Honours*: and yet it would scarcely be taken well, if this conclusion should pass for current, that the most Honourable are the most Proud. For then it would follow that none are so viti, so like the Devil, so unlike God: and so the Princes and nobles of the earth would become the most despicable persons in the world, and their very Honour it self would be their *disfavour*, and so no Honour. And if worldly Honours will not warrant you to conclude the persons to be most Proud, much less will the Heavenly Honour.

There is the more Need and the less Fear of the Honour of the Godly, because it is the blessing of an Humbled soul. God casts them down before he lifts them up: It is only the Humble that he exalteth. They feel their sin and misery before they know their Honour. A Broken heart hath need of healing, and a fainting soul is fittest for a Cordial. You need not fear when you refresh the sick, lest it should make them *worse* as it may do the sound. A comfortable word to one that is lamenting over the dead, and weeping at a grave, is not so likely to make them Proud, as to others in prosperity. A drooping and discouraged soul, is hardly raised high enough, and kept from sinking: They have laid the sentence full upon them,

them, and have had the rope as it were about their neck : they have been at the very gates of Hell : they have seen by faith what work, what woes there are for sin in the life to come, and therefore these souls have need to hear of their Felicity.

3. Moreover, they have a great deal of work to do, and their strength and courage is too small : and the work is such as flesh and blood cannot away with, much less afford them sufficient strength for. Such labourers must have encouraging strengthening food. Their work is such as will keep them under. God doth not keep his servants idle : and therefore they are in the less danger of being Proud and wanton. Isa. 35. 12, 3, 4. [They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.] And why is this foretold them ? [Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees : say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not : behold your God will come with vengeance, our God with a recompence ; he will come and save you] Heb. 12. 12. 13. Wherefore lift up thy hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame, be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed : we are commanded. [Therefore say I to you, be ye also ready : for in as much as ye know not the day nor the hour, whereon the Son of man cometh, be ye also ready.] 1 Thes. 5. 1-11. 12, 13. 14, 15. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 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1410, 1411, 1412, 1413, 1414, 1415, 1416, 1417,

8. 17, 18. As the Angels said to *Elijah*, 1 King. 19. 7. *and ease, because the journey is too great for thee* ; so God encrageth his servants by his Honours and rewards, because the journey, the labour, the suffering is *too great*, without such encouragement to be cheerfully undergone : And in the strength of these consolations, they bear the cross.

3. The objection is most against the Lord. If it be an error to Honour and extol the Godly, as tending to make them Proud, it is God himself that is the owner of it. The words that I have recited to you are his own words. Do we devise these sayings ? Or do we not shew them you in the Scripture ? And dare you charge God with error, or encouraging Pride ? Do you think he knew not what he said, when he spake such Honourable things of his servants. Did he need you to have caught him to have endited his word, and to have warned him that he make not his servants proud ? As if he hated not pride as much as you !

4. Yea God will do more then this for his servants, he will advance them to *Salvation*, and yet he will not make them proud. There is no *Pride* in *Heaven*, though there be the greatest *Glory*. The *Angels* are most glorious, and yet most proud. If you would not wish God to keep me out of *Heaven* let it make them proud, you should not grudge at his Honouring them in earth, with the mention of their *Heavenly* titles, upon that account.

7. The *Exaltation* of the *Saints* is a *spiritual* *exaltation*, which is not so apt to make men proud, as *earthly* *exaltation*. *Charity* puffeth not up, *envy* *envy* doth. It is *selfishness* that is the *Life* of *Pride*, (which consisteth in excessive *self-esteem*, and desire of an excessive esteem with others, and sole magnified by them) And nothing but *Grace* can subdue the *selfishness*, and therefore nothing else can destroy pride.

8. Moreover the Honour of the *Saints*, is the less likely to make them proud, because *Holiness* is part of the *Grace* that is bestowed on them. To be *Proud* and *Poly*, is to be *not* *and* *all*, to be *Light* and *Dark* : they are plain contraries. No man is proud but for want of *Holiness* : And therefore that *Health* should *efficiently* make men proud is impossible, any more then *Health* can make men sick, or *Darkness* can be caused by *Light*. And if *efficiency* may be the *cause* of the *Health*, then it must be such a *negative* as he is *nothing*. *Holiness* doth ever

pride, and contain Humility and self-denial, as an essential part: All Christs Disciples learn of him in their measure to be meek and lowly.

9. Let experience tell you whether it be not some worldly Honour or parts and gifts, that are the much commoner object of Pride then Holiness. I have oft heard talk of mens being proud of their *Humility* and *Holiness*: but the Temptations of my own soul, have comparatively layn but little that way, nor have I observed it the common case of others, in any proportion with other kinds of Pride. Riches and Honours, and Beauty and Dignity, I see people ordinarily proud of. And I see many Proud of *Counterfeit Graces*, that have none that is sincere (as far as may be perceived by others) to be proud of. And I see many Proud of their *Learning*, and *Knowledge* and *visible wages*, a hundred fold more then ever I found true Christians, Proud of the *Love of God*, and a *Heavenly mind*. Alas we have much a doe for the most part, to discern that we have any of this well, and to find so much of it in our selves as is necessary to our support and thankfulness.

10. Lastly consider, what abundance of Means the Lord hath adjoined as Antidotes with his servants Honours to keep them from being puffed up with Pride, and then tell me whether you dare charge God with error or want of wisdom in this thing.

1. The nature and life of Holiness consisteth in the souls returning home to God, and abiding to him, and walking as before him. And there is not a more powerful means in the world, to keep *Humble* the soul, then the *Knowledge of God*. O when a poor sinner hath but any lively apprehensions of the Greatness, and Glory of the Lord, it amazeth him, and levelleth him with the dust, and abaseth him in his owo esteem, and maketh him fay with Job 40: 4, 5. [Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth] & 4: 5, 6. [I have heard of thy works hearing of them, but now mine eyes hath seen, wherefore I abhor myself even from the day I was created] One glimpse of God were enough to humble any soul that truly knoweth him. A Godly man hath little to do with that Majesty that continually attendeth him. His home is with him. His strengths are on him. his work is with him. His word that he receiveth, and beareth and discourseth of, and liveth at his word, with reverence and Godly fear, as know-

ing that our God is a consuming fire; *Heb. 12. 28, 29.* Is it God that he prayeth to, that he meditateth on, and he praiseth and bath still to do with. And therefore no wonder if he walk humbly with so holy and great a God.

2. The sin and misery that once they were in, while they have not God, will do much to keep humble a gracious soul, as long as they live. Though God so forget our sins as to forgive them, yet we can scarce forgive our selves, or at least can never forgive them. Though he see no sin in his servants, as he feeth it in the world, nor so as to hate and condemn them for it; yet they see that once they were as bad as the world, and were children of wrath as well as others; They condemn themselves when God doth justify them; and set their sins before their faces, which God doth cast behind his back. O those dark, those ungodly, and those perilous dayes, will never be forgotten by the renewed soul. The thoughts of them shall ever keep us humble. When we look on the wicked miserable world, to think that such were many of us, though mercy have washed, and sanctified, and justified us.

3. Moreover, God hath so contrived the way of their salvation, that they shall have all by a *Redeemer*, and by free *Grace*, and none shall be justified by the works of the Law, nor by my merit of my own; but *Buying* is excluded by the *Law of Faith*. *Roms. 3. 19, 27, 28.* and we shall have nothing but what we require besides and contrary to our desire.

4. And also too much corruption still remaineth in us: We have flesh that fighteth against the spirit; *Rom. 7. 24. Gal. 5. 17.* We know but in part; and *Love God* knoweth not; and confound him with such confident weaknesses; that these things are usually such humiliating matters to a gracious soul; that were it not for the Comforter, they would be unable to look up. O to see how dark we are! how far from God! how strange to heaven! how little we believe, and know, and love! these are humiliating thoughts indeed to a soul that is acquainted with its infirmities. *Prov. 3. 24, 25.* or the *hypocrite* in the world, would be in humbling to them. To find such remanency of that *adversitie*, that all them doth and had cast them downer, if it had not cast their *Lion-faced* skin is constant matter of humiliation.

5. And too often do their *hypocrisies* give advantage of them; and produce force. These fay of the *righteous* and *or doers* and this also must be grievous to them.

6. The

6. The very *Bodily infirmities* of Believers, are a constant help to keep them humble. They have all this *treasure buried in unclean vessels*, 2 Cor. 4. 7. Their souls are here so poorly lodged in corruptible Tabernacles of earth, and so meanly cloathed with frail, diseased, mortal flesh, that it is madness to be proud.

7. And the *many and great afflictions* of the godly, are medicines that are purposely given them by their Physician to cure Pride, and keep them humble. Why else must their sufferings be so many? and why must they daily bear the Cross? but that they may be conformed to the image of Christ.

8. And to the same end it is that God doth let loose upon them *so many enemies*. All Satans temptations, and the worlds allurements and vexations, and all their disappointments here, and all the scorns and mocks of the ungodly, and the censures and slanders of wicked tongues, and often bitter persecutions, what are they but the bitter medicines of God (permitted and ordered by him, though caused by the Devil and wicked men) to have the servants of the Lord, from the sin and danger of being lifted up? Do you say that their *Honour* will make them proud? Why just that thus oppose them and despise them, are *curing* them of their *pride*, and do not know it: as Scullions scour the rust of the vessels for their Masters use, and as Leeches draw *out* the blood that causeth the disease, and as the Jews by their sin promoted the Redemption of the world by the death of Christ. When God seeth his servants in danger of being lifted up above measure, he oft sendeth a messenger of Satan (who may be an executioner of Gods chastisements) to buffet them, (2 Cor. 11. 7.) Sometimes by slanders, sometime by reproaches, sometime by imprisonments or greater sufferings, and sometimes by hid troubleous temptations.

9. The *very foresight* of *death* is *self* is a *humbling means*: and the last enemy Death, is yet unconquered, and our Bodies must rot in dust and darkness, and be kept in the grave as common until the Resurrection, that the soul may not grow proud that hath such a body.

10. And the *Day of Judgement* is so described to us in the Scripture, as tends to keep the soul in *awe* and in *Humility*. To think of *such a day*, and *such a reckoning*, before *such a God*, we shall should humble us.

11. And our *Absolution* and *Confession* at that day, promised us now but *conditionally* (though God will seeke the condition be performed by all that he will have.) And therefore the poor soul is oft so far to *say* about the *certain* *Security* of his own *Faith* and *Repentance*, that most of the godly are kept in *fears* and *doubtings* to the death. Yes and *Humility* and *Self-denial* are *parts* of *this Condition*: And all their Honour and *Glory* with *Christ* is promised to the *Humble* only: *Humility* commanded them in the *Precept*: *Humility* is it that they are exhorted to by the *Ministers*: And *Pride* is threatened with everlasting *wrath*, and described as the *Devil's image*. So that *Moliness* hath all the *advantages* against *Pride* that can be *expected*.

12. To conclude, the *Godly* know that as they have nothing but *from God*, so they have nothing but *for God*: so that their *own Honour* is *for him*, more than *for themselves*; and it is *essential* to their *Holiness*, to make *God* *their end*, and *set him high*, and *refer all* to his *Pleasure* and *Glory*. So that you see now that we *may Honour them that fear the Lord*, (*Psalms 35. 4.*) without being guilty of making them *proud*, and that we must not deny them the *Honour* that *God* hath given them as *their due*, for *fear* of their being *proud* of it. Though this, as all things else, must be *prudently managed* to particular persons, according to their *various states*.

And therefore let me here warn all you that profess the *feast* of *God*: Take heed lest you be *proud* of any thing that *God* hath *Honoured* you with: For if you be, you set what an *Army* of *Reasons* and *Means* you *sin* against, and consequently how great your *sin* will be. And your *conscience* and the *world* shall be forced to *justify* *God* and his *Holy ways*, and to *prove* against you, that it was not long of them that you were *proud*: and that *nose* in the *world* was more against it than *God* and *Holiness*: and that it was not because you were so *Holiness*, but because you were no more *Religious*. And if you have *Knowledge*, *Gifts*, or *whatsoever be manifested* in you, it is *not necessary* that that you are *more* of the *sanctified*; when your *professions* of *holiness* will never prove that *Sanctity* was a *cause* or *consideration* in your *sin*.

AND now I have shewed you the Honour of Godliness, let us briefly, (and but briefly) consider of your Honour that reject it, and see then whether the godly or ungodly are more Honourable.

1. Ungodly men have the *Basest Master* in the world. Would you know who? Let Christ be Judge, John 8. 44. [Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father you will do.] 2 Tim. 2. 26. They are taken captive by the Devil at his will; that is, to do his will: It is he that stirreth you up to filthy talking, to speak against Godliness, to curse and swear, and you do his will. His will is, that you should neglect a holy life, and you do his will. His will is, that you live not after the spirit, but after the flesh, and you do his will. O poor souls! Do you think it is only Witches that expressly Covenant with him, that are his miserable servants! Alas, it is you also, if you do his will. For (if you will believe either God or common reason) [to whom you yield your selves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.] Rom. 6. 16. The godly themselves were the servants of sin, till they obeyed from the heart the doctrine of the Lord, v. 17. And are you not come to fair preferment, to be the Devils drudges! Though he should cloath your Bodies with Purple and fine linnen, and feed you sumptuously every day, yet indeed you are no better, as the case of that miserable man may tell you, Luke 16. It is the greatest Baseness to have so Base a Master.

2. And it is but an ignoble *Base design* that the ungodly carry on in the world. What is it but to provide for, and please their flesh? It aimeth at nothing beyond this life. And a beast can eat, and drink, and sleep, and play, and satisfie his lust, as much as they. A swine can carry a mouth full of straw to his lodging, and a bird can build a nest for her young ones. And what do ungodly men more in the world! whether Gentlemen or Beggars, the flattered Gallants or the poor day-labourers, if they be not such as first seek Heaven, and live to God, what do they but make a pudder in the world, about a little dirt or smoak? and find themselves somewhat to do that is next to nothing, instead of that for which they were created; and busie themselves about nothing till their time is gone, and the night is come when none can

can work? If you would judge of a mans *Designs*, fore-see his *Attainments*. If you can tell what *End* it is that they come to, you may know how to judge of their *intentions* and their *course*. Their *corpes* you know, have no greater a *Happiness*, (after a few foolish merry hours) then to lie in the earth as *filth* or *dust*. You can see no *Honour* attained there. It is a child indeed that thinks a *gilded Monument* over a rotten *carkase*, is any great matter of *Honour* or *Benefit* to it. And if you look after the *soul*, (by the prospective of the *Word of God*) alas, it goeth to far greater dishonour. And is this it that worldlings make such a stir for?

3. The *work* also that they are *employed* in, is like the *Design*: *Sin*, which is the *Basest* thing in the world, is their employment. The *work* of a *Scullion*, or the basest honest trade you can imagine, is a thousand times less dishonourable, then *sin*: Yet flattered Gallants believe not this, when they can please their *flesh* without losing the *reputation* of worthy Gentlemen! Nor will our common ungodly people be perwaded of it, that are more ashamed to be found praying then sinning, and to be called a *Puritan* then a *Good-fellow* or a *Swearer*: and that think they are as good men as others, when up to the ears in the drudgery of the Devil: As if the *filth* of *sin* were no dishonour to them, which nothing but the *Spirit* and *blood* of *Christ* is able to wash out. These are the men that *Paul* mentioneth with weeping, *Pbil. 3. 18.* that *mind earthly things, whose God is their belly, and who glory in their shame*.

4. Moreover, it is a *Base disposition* that ungodly men are possessed with. Though their *Natures* are essentially noble as being the *work* of *God*, and capable of most glorious things; yet have they made them *Dispositionately Vile*: They are *fleshy-minded*, *earthly-minded*, ignorant of *Heavenly* things, not favouring the *things* of the *Spirit*, but like the *Serpent*, crawling on *earth*, and feeding on the *dust* *Gras* is sweeter to a *horse* then *junkets*; and a little *money* or *vain-glory* is sweeter to a *fleshy* mind then *God* and *Glory*, and all the *treasures* of *Saints* and *Angels*. A *swine* never thinks of *God* or *Heaven*, but of his *dratice* and *stie*: *Ease*, and *good chear*, and *money*, and the *flattery* of *men*, are the *God* and the *Heaven* of *sensual* men. And are not these men of *Base dishonourable* *spirits*? *Un-worthy* men! might you have an *Everlasting life*, and will you pre-

preferre a few dayes fleshly pleasure ? As surely as you may know the Baseness of a swine or dog by what they feed upon, so surely may you know the baseness of a carnal mind, by the baseness of its desires and delights.

5. It is also a *Base Society* that ungodly men are members of. They are in the *Kingdom of darkness*, *Col. 1. 13. Acts 26. 18.* and are dead in sin, in which they walk according to the course of the world, according to the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now walketh in the children of disobedience, among whom they have their conversations, *Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3.* Devils are their invisible companions, and wicked men their visible : but they have none of the presence and favour of the Lord, nor any communion with him in the spirit.

6. The greatest *Dishonour* of the ungodly is, that the God of Heaven refuseth to Honour them : yea he despiseth them : yea he dishonoureth them with most contemptuous titles. And certainly God knoweth what he saith of them ; and it is impossible that he should do them wrong. Yet doth he call them the *seed of the Serpent*, that stand at enmity with his flock, *Gen. 3. 15.* he calls them *his enemies*, and accordingly will use them, *Luke 19. 27.* He calls them *Dogs* and *Swine*, and the *Children of the Devil*, *John 8. 44. Matth. 7. 6.* They dishonoured and despised him, and he will dishonour and despise them, and hath resolved that their very names shall rot, *Prov. 10. 7.*

7. But it is the *Everlasting shame* that will tell us what was the *Honour* of the ungodly. When Christ shall be ashamed of them before his Father and the *Heavenly Angels*, *Matth. 8. 38.* and shall tell them that he never knew them, *Matth. 7. 23.* When all their former pomp and splendour, will be turned into perpetual shame and sorrows, then where is the Honour of the ungodly world ? Where then are their flatterers ? Who boweth to them, and calleth them *Right Honourable* and *Right Worshipfull* any more ? Where now are their sumptuous houses and attendance ? Now they have other kind of servitours ; and other language, and other usage then they had on earth. And the poor wretches that stormed at a faithful Minister for foretelling these woeful changes to them, and speaking so dishonourably of them, as to tell them of their sin, are at last say-

ing an hundred fold worse of *themselves*, then ever we did say against them. Then they shall need none to call them *fools*, and *vile*, and *wretches*, but their own *Consciences*, that will speak it out, and speak it again ten thousand times, and never be bribed to forbear. O how base a despicable Generation will the ungodly then be (that now speak so stoutly and look so high) when God shall everlastingly frown them into *contempt* and *misery*, and the glorified *Saints* shall look down upon them without compassion, even praising the Justice that for ever doth torment them! Then let the Kings and Nobles of the earth maintain their antient Honours if they can: Or let them take comfort in the remembrance of their former dreams: and try whether this will be to them instead of a drop of water.

Well, Sirs, I have faithfully told you from the Word of God, of the *Honour* of the *Godly*, and the *Baseness* of the *ungodly*, that you may be resolved, which is the Better part. If yet you will not see, you shall see and be ashamed, *Isa. 26. 11.*
When you have heard your last and dreadful doom, and seen the Lord make up his Jewels, then shall you discern between the Righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not, *Mal. 3. 17, 18.

CHAP. X.

Holiness the most Pleasant Way.

I have proved beyond all reasonable contradiction that Holiness is the *Safe*, the *Honest*, the *Profitable* and the *Honourable* state and course: But my hardest task is yet to be done; and that is, to prove it the most *Pleasant* way. And the difficulty of this is not at all from the *matter*, but from the *persons* with whom I have to do. For nothing is *Pleasant* unto men, but what is *suita*ble to their *natures*, and apprehended by them to be for their good, or in it self more excellent then their good. That is *Pleasant* to one man that is *loathsome* to another. As the food and converse is *delightful* to a *beast*, that is *loathsome* and as *bad* as death to man: So one mans *Pleasure* is another's *Pain*. Even about the common matters of this life, variety of complexions, educations, customs, dispositions, doth cause a variety of affectiōns; the difference between the sanctified and unsanctified, the spiritual and the carnal mind, doth cause a greater contrariety. If therefore the error of wicked minds, or the distemper of your souls, do make the *Best* things seem the *worst*, and the *sweetest* things to seem most *Bitter*, this is no confutation of my Argument, that proves the way of *Godliness* most *Pleasant*. If I would prove that wine is *pleasanter* then Vinegar, or Bread then *dirt* or *ashes*, I mean not to appeal to the appetites of the *sick*; It is the *sound* and *healthful* that must be judges. If a man will suffer his mind to be possessed with prejudice and base thoughts of God himself, no wonder if he cannot love him, nor take any delight in him.

And if men have a malignant enmity to *Godliness*, no reason will perswade them that it is most pleasant, but what perswades them from that enmity. No Reason will perswade a sloathful person that *Labour* is better then *sleep* and *idleness*; no Reason will perswade a dranckard, glutton, or voluptuous wretch, that abstinence and continence are the *sweetest* life. Could we change their Hearts, we should change their Pleasures. Such as men are, such are their delights: But the thing that I undertake, is, to manifest to any competent discerner, that *Holiness* is the most *Pleasant*

Pleasant course ; and that all the Pleasures of the Earth are Nothing to the Pleasures which the Godly find in God, and in a Holy life : and if any be not of this mind, it is because his souls diseases have made him an incompetent judge. And that *Holiness* is the Pleasant State of life, will appear to you, 1. From the Nature of the thing it self. 2. From the encouragements and helps with which it is attended. 3. From the effects and fruits.

I. The *Nature* of Holiness is to be found, 1. In the Understanding, 2. In the will and affections, and 3. In the Practice of mens lives. And in all these I shall shew you that it is the most *Delightful course*.

I. *Knowledge* in it self is a *pleasant* thing to humane nature. *Ignorance* is the blindness of the soul. It is not so *pleasant* for the *eye* to behold the sun, as for the *mind* of man to discern the truth. To *Know Good and Evil*, had never been the matter of so strong a *Temptation* to *Adam*, if *Knowledge* had not been very *desirable* to innocent nature. How hard do many even ungodly persons study to *know* the *mysteries* of *Nature*? And nothing hath more strongly tempted some wretches to *witchcraft* or contracts with the *Devil*, then a desire of *knowing unrevealed things*, which by his means they have hoped to attain. A *studious* man hath far more *natural valuable Delight*, in his reading and successful studies, then a *voluptuous Epicure* hath in his *sensual Delights*.

But it is a *special kind* of *Knowledge* that Holiness doth (initially) consist in, which transcendeth in true Pleasure all the common wisdom of the world : For

I. How *Pleasant* a thing must it needs be to *know things of so high a Nature* ! To know the Almighty, Living God : to behold his wisdom, goodness and power, in his glorious works, to be led to him by all the Creatures, and hear of him by every Providence, and find his Holy Blessed Name in every leaf of his sacred word, how sweet and pleasant a thing is this ! To know the Divine Nature, Persons, Attributes, and Will, to know the mystery of the Incarnation, of the person, natures, undertaking, performance of the blessed Mediator Jesus Christ, to know his birth, his life, temptations, conquests, his righteousness, his holy doctrine and example, the Law and promise, the Law of Nature, and the Covenant of Grace, the sufferings, Resurrection, ascension,

son, glorification and intercession of our Lord: to know his Kingdom, Laws, and Government, and his Judgement, with his Rewards and punishments; to know the sanctifying works of the Holy Ghost, by which we are prepared for everlasting life; and to know that life (though but by faith) for which we are here prepared, how high and pleasant a thing is this! If it be pleasant to know the course of nature, in those higher parts that are above the vulgar reach, what is it to know the God of Nature, and the true use and End of Nature? What high things doth the poorest Christian know? He knoweth the things that are invisible.

Think not that faith is so void of Evidence as not to deserve the name of Knowledge: We Know the things which we do believe. Nicodemus could say from the Evidence of Miracles, Joh. 3. 2. *We know that thou art a Teacher come from God: for no man could do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* Joh. 9. 29. *We know that God spake to Moses,* [say the Jews. We know that the Scripture testimony is true, Joh. 21. 24. 2 Cor. 3. 1. We know (even by believing) that if this earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.] 1 Joh. 3. 2. We know that when we shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.] Joh. 14. 20. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.] We know that no Whoremonger such like shall inherit eternal life, Eph. 5. 5. We know that our Labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 58. Many such passages of Scripture tell us, that Faith is a certain Knowledge, and that Invisible things revealed by God, are certainly known. We know what Saints and Angels are now doing in the highest heavens: for God hath told us. We know the most high and glorious things revealed by God, which we never saw. And is not the Pleasure of such knowledge greater then the Pleasure of all the wealth, the honour and sensual enjoyments in this world! I durst almost refer the case to one of you that are most besoothed by your own sensuality. If you could go to morrow and meet with a soul from Heaven, or with an Angel, that could tell you what becomes of souls, and what is done in another world, Would you not rather goe to such a conference, then go as far to a drinking, or a bowling, or some such recreation? I think you would, if it were but to satisfie your curiositie and desire

desire of *Knowing*. Why then should not the servants of Christ more Delight, in the reading and hearing the words of Christ, that came from the bosom of the Father, that hath seen God, and is with God, and is God himself, that telleth them more certainly of the Invisible things then any Saints or Angels can tell them? Why should not this, I say be sweeter to them, then all the fleshly pleasures in the world? O that I could know more of God, and more of the mystery of Redemption, even of an obedient, crucified, glorified Christ; and more of the invisible world, and of the blessed state of souls, on condition I left all the Pleasures of this world, to sensual men! O that I had more clear and firm apprehensions of these transcendent glorious things! How easily could I spare the Pleasures of the flesh, and leave those husks to swine to feed on? O could my Soul get nearer God, and be more irradiated with his heavenly beams, my mind would need no other recreation, and I should as little relish carnal Pleasures, as carnal minds do relish the heavenly delights. As earthly things are poor and low, so is the knowledge of them. As things spiritual and heavenly are High and Glorious, mysterious and profound, the knowledge of them is accordingly Delightful [*And without* *contreversie* *great* *is* *the* *mystery* *of* *Godliness*; *God* *was* *manifest* *in* *the* *flesh*, *justified* *in* *the* *spirit*, *seen* *of* *Angels*, *preached* *to* *the* *Gentiles*, *believed* *on* *in* *the* *world*, *received* *up* *into* *glory*, 1 Tim. 3.16. *Faith* *is* *the* *Evidence* *of* *things* *not* *seen*, Heb. 11.1. It is far pleasanter by faith to see the Lord, than to see any Creature by the eye of flesh: and sweeter by faith to see Heaven opened, and there behold our Glorified Lord, then to see a horse-race, or stage-play, or any of the fooleties of the world.]

2. The knowledge of *things to Come* is specially desired, and Godliness containeth that *Faith* which knoweth *things to come*. How glad would men be to be told what shall befall them to the last hour of their lives? The woman of Samaria Joh. 4. called out her neighbours with admiration to see Christ, as one that had told her all that she had done: But if he had told her all that ever she would do, for the time to come, and all that ever should befall her, it might have astonished her much more. Believers know what hath been even before the world was made, and how it was made, and what hath been since then, and they know what will be to all eternity. A true Believer knows from Scripture,

pture, whither mens Souls go after death, and how their Bodies shall be raised again, and how Christ will come to Judge the world, and who shall then be justified, and who shall be condemned: and what shall be the case of the godly and the ungodly to all eternity. And is it not more pleasant to know these things, then to possess all the vain delights of the earth? Can the flesh afford you any thing so delightful?

3. Especially, it is desireable and Pleasant to Know those things that *most concern us*: Needless speculations and curiosities we can spare: There is a Knowledge that brings more pain then pleasure; Yea there is a Knowledge that will torment. But to know our own affairs, our greatest and most necessary affairs; to know our threatened misery to prevent it, and to know our offered Happiness to obtain it; to know our *Portion*, our *Honour*, our *God*, what can be more Pleasant to the mind of man! Other mens matters we can pass by: But to Know such things concerning our own souls, as what we must be and do for ever, and what course we must take to be everlastingly happy, must needs be a feast to the mind of a wise man. Ask but a soul that is haunted with temptations to unbelief, whether any thing would be more welcome to him, then the clear and satisfying apprehensions of a lively faith? Ask one that lyeth in tears or groans, through the deling of their sin, and the fears of the wrath of God, and doublings of his love, whether the satisfying Knowledge of pardon, and reconciliation, and divine acceptance, would not be more pleasant to them, then any of your merriments can be to you? Ask that poor soul that hath lost the apprehension of his Evidences of grace, and walks in darknes, and hath no light, that seeks, and cryes, and perceives no hearing, whether the discovery of his Evidences, the assurance that his Prayers are accepted, and the light of Gods countenance shining on him, would not be Better to him then any Recreation, or any Pleasure the earth affords. Ask any man at the hour of death, that is not a block, Whether now the Knowledge of his salvation would not be Better and more Pleasant to him, then all the lust, or sport, or honours of the world.

4. The Knowledge of the *Best* and *Joyfulllest* matters, must be the *Best* and *Pleasantest* Knowledge. And nothing can be Better then *God and Glory*. Nothing can be sweeter then *salvation*; and therefore this must be the *sweeter* Knowledge. I had rather have

the pleasure of one hours clear and lively Knowledge of my salvation, and of the special Love of God, then to be exalted above the greatest Prince, and to have all the Pleasures that my senses can desire. The Delights of the flesh are base and brutish, and nothing to the spiritual Heavenly Delights of the renewed mind.

5. The manner of our Holy Knowledge, maketh it more Delightful. 1: It is a *Certain* and *Infallible* Knowledge. It is not a [may be], or bare possibility: It is not, *It is possible there may be a Heaven and Happiness hereafter*: But it is as true as the Word of God is true: We have his own hand, and seal, and earnest for it: Even his *precious promises*, and *oath*, confirmed by *miracles*, and *fulfilled-prophecy*, and bearing his own image and superscription, and shining to us by its own light: We have in our hearts the *spirit* which is *Gods earnest*, by which we are sealed up to the day of our final full redemption. And if the soul yet stagger at the promise of God through the remnants of unbelief, that shall not make the promise of God of none effect; but his foundation shall still stand sure: His word shall not pass till all be fulfilled, though heaven and earth shall pass away. A message by one that were sent to us from the dead, were not more credible then the Word of God. And this *Certainty* of Holy Faith and Knowledge is, a very great contentment to the soul. When the Glory of the Saints is a thing as sure as if we saw it with our eyes, and as sure as these things which we daily see; it is a great pleasure to the soul, when it can but apprehend this joyful *Certainty*.

2. And that there is a certain *easiness* and *plainness* in the great and *necessary* points of faith, as to the manner of Revelation, doth add much to *Faith's Satisfaction* and *Delight*. The points that *life* and *death* lie on, are not left so obscure as might perplex us, lest we did not know the meaning of them. But they are so plain, that he that runs may read them; and the simple, that are but honest-hearted, may certainly understand them: Which quiets, and *pleaseth*, and *satisfies* the mind.

3. And yet there is an exciting *Difficulty* in many things that are offered to our Knowledge, which doth but make our holy studies the more delightful. If the Word of God were so plain and *obvious to all*, that it might be all understood at the first reading, the plainness would bring our *Sacred Knowledge* into con-

things, as being an easie common thing. Things common and easily got, are little set by : But when the *plainness* is such as may prevent our *despair and dissatisfaction*, and yet the *Difficulty* such, that it may hold us in study, and prevent our *contempt*, it makes the most delightful Knowledge. It is Pleasant to find some daily addition to our Light, and to be on the gaining and thriving hand, and this upon our diligent search : *Successes* are as pleasant as a present fulnes of supplies : The daily blessing of God upon our studies, and humble learning, addeth to our delight. So that all this set together, may shew you how pleasant a thing it is to have the Knowledge of a Saint.

Especially if you add that he hath an *Experimental*, and so a *sweeter Knowledge*, then the most learned men have that are ungodly. He hath *tasted* that the Lord is gracious, and he hath *tasted* the sweetnes of his Love, and of all the Riches of his Grace in Christ, and of his full and precious promises, and of the inward powerful workings of his spirit. His *experimental Knowledge* is the most Delightful Knowledge.

The Pleasure of Natural Knowledge is great, but the Pleasure of saving Knowledge is much greater. I do not believe that ever any of the Ambitious troublers of the world, that let go Heaven that they may Rule on Earth, have half the Pleasure in their Greatness and usurped Dignities, as an honest Student hath in his *Books*, and studious exercises and successes : But if you compare the Pleasures of their Greatnes and Commands, with the Pleasure of a *true Believing soul*, in his life of Faith, and sweet forethoughts of his Heavenly Inheritance, I must plainly tell you that we disdain the comparison. Again I say, that if you will compare the Drunkards, the Fornicators, or the Ambitious or Covetous mans delight, with the solace that I find in my *retired studies*, even about *natural common things*, I disdain the comparison : But if you compare their *Pleasure*, with that little, alas too little, pleasure that I find in the believing thoughts of Life Eternall, I do not only disdain your comparison, but detest it.

Were I minded to be long, I would shew you from these twelve particular Instances, the abundant Pleasure of Holy Knowledge.

1. What a Pleasant thing is it to know the Lord, the Eternal God, in his blessed Attributes ! The dimmest glimmering Knowledge

ledge of God, is better then the clearest Knowledge of all the mysteries of nature.

2. How Pleasant is it to know the works of his Creation ? How, and why, and when he made the world, and all that is therein ?

3. How Pleasant is it to know the blessed Son of God, and to behold the face of his Fathers Love that is revealed in him as his fullest Image ?

4. How Pleasant is it to know the Law and Gospel : the Master and the Method : the litteral and spiritual sense : to see there the mind and will of God : and to see our Charter for the Heavenly Inheritance ; and read the Precepts, and the Promises, and the Examples of the faith and patience of the Saints ?

5. How Pleasant is it to know the Heavenly operations of the Holy Ghost , and the nature and action of his several Graces, and the uses of every one of them to our souls ; and especially to find them in our selves , and to be skilled in using them ?

6. How Pleasant is it to know the nature and frame of the Church of Christ which is his Body, and to know the difference and use of the several members? To understand the office of the Ministry, and why Christ hath set them in the Church , and how much love he hath manifested therein : that they should preach to us, and offer us Reconciliation in *his name and stead*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. and *marry us unto Christ* in Baptism , receiving us in *his name* into the Church and holy Covenant : and that in *his name and stead* they should deliver us *his body and blood*, and *absolve* the *penitent sinner* from his sins, and deliver him a sealed pardon, and receive the returning humbled soul into the Church of Christ and Communion of the Saints !

7. How Pleasant is it to know the nature and use of all Christ's Ordinances : The excellencies of his Holy Word : the use of Baptism, and the refreshing, strengthening use of the Supper of the Lord : the use and benefit of Holy prayer, and praises , and thanksgiving, and Church-order, and all parts of the Communion of the Saints !

8. Yea there is a holy *Pleasure* in knowing our very *sin* and *folly*. When God bringeth a sinner to himself, though his *sin* be *odious* to him, yet to know the *sin* is *Pleasant* ; and therefore he prayeth that God would shew him the bottom of his heart, and the most secret or *odious* of his sins.

9. And it is *Pleasant* to a Christian to know his *Duty*. It very much quieteth and delighteth his mind, when he can but know what is the will of *God*: When the way of *Duty* is plain before him, how chearfully can he go on, whatever meet him? and how easie doth it make his labour and his suffering?

10. Yea it is *Pleasant* to a *Believer* to understand his very *danger*: Though the *Danger* it self be dreadful to him, yet to know it, that he may avoid it, is his desire and his delight.

11. And how *Pleasant* is it to understand all the *Helps*, *Encouragements* and *Comforts* that *God* hath provided for us in our way? and how many more are for us, then against us?

12. But above all, how *Pleasant* is it to know by faith, the life that we must live with *God* for ever? and what he will do for us to all eternity, in the performance of his holy *Covenant*.

I do but briefly name these Instances of Delightful Knowledge, which are sweeter to the holy soul then all the Pleasures of sin to the ungodly. Do you think that any of you hath such solid Pleasure in your sins, as *David* had in the *Law of God*, when he meditated in it with such delight, and faith, *How sweet is it to my soul*? even sweeter then the *honey and the honey-comb*. Surely you dare not compare with him in *Pleasures*.

2. Another part of *Holiness* that is *Pleasant* in the *Nature* of it, is that which is subjected in the *heart* or *affections*. And here is the chiefest of its sweetnes and delights.

1. The very *compliance* of the *will* with the *Will of God*, and its *Conformity* to his *Law*, doth carry a quieting *Pleasure* in it. That soul is *happiest* that is *nearest* *God*, and *likest* to him; and that soul may well be *fullest* of *Delight*, that is most *Happy*: And that soul is *nearest* and *likest unto God*, whose *Will* is most conformed to his *Will*: The trouble of the *Heart* is its *unsettledness*, when it is not bottomed on the *Will of God*: When we feel that *Gods Will* doth *Rule* and *satisfie* us, and that we would fain be what he would have us be, and *rest* in his *Disposing Will*, as well as *obey* his *Commanding Will*, this gives abundant *Pleasure* and quietness to the soul.

2. The holy workings of *Charity* in the soul, are exceeding *Pleasant*. All the acts of *Love* to *God* and *man* are very sweet; this is the *holy work*, that is its own *wages*.

3. The *love* of *God* is so sweet an exercise, that verily any soul had.

had rather be employed in it with sense and vigour, then to be Lord of all the earth. O could I but be taken up with the *Love of God*, how easily could I spare the *Pleasure of the flesh*? Might I but see the Loveliness of my dear Creator, with a clearer view; and see his glory in his noble works; Might I but see and feel that saving Love which he hath manifested in the Redeemer, till my soul were ravished and filled with his Love, how little should I care who had the Pleasures of this deceitful world! Had I more of that blessed spirit of Adoption, and more of those filial affections to my heavenly Father, which his unutterable Love bespeaks; and were I more sensible of his abundant mercy, and did my soul but breath and long after him more earnestly, I would pity the miserable Tyrants of the world, that are worse then Beggars while they domineer, and taste not of that Kingdom of Love and Pleasure that dwelleth in my breast. All the Pleasures of the world, are the laughing of a mad man, or the sports of a child, or the dreams of a sick man, in comparison of the Pleasures of the Love of God.

2. And the *Love of Holiness*, the *Image of God* hath, its degree of *Pleasure*. And so hath the *Love of the Holy servants of the Lord*. There is a sweetnes in the soul in its going out after any Holy object, in spiritual Love. Yea more, our very *common Love of men*, and our *Love of Enemies*, hath its proportion of pleasure, far better then the sensual Pleasure of the ungodly. To feel so much of the operations of grace, and to answer our holy pattern, in Loving them that hate us, doth give much ease and pleasure to the mind. The exercises of Love to God and man, and that for his sake, are the exceeding pleasure of a gracious soul.

And here by the way, you may take notice of one reason why Hypocrites and ungodly men find no such sweetnes in the exercises of Religion; Because they let alone the inward *Pleasant work of Love*, which is the soul and life of *Outward duty*. This inward work is the *Pleasant work*; while they are strangers unto this, their outward duties will be but a toil, and seem a drudgery or a wearysome employment.

There is a *Pleasure even in Holy Desires*: When a Christian feeleth his heart enlarged, in longing after the welfare of the Church and the good of others. Though the absence of all thing desired be a ~~misfortune~~, yet the exercise of holy desire

(which is an act of Love) is pleasant to us. If the *Lusts* have a pleasure in their *vile Desires*, and the *Ambitions* and the *Covetous* have a *pleasure* in their *vain and delusive desires*, the wise well-guided desires of a true believer must needs be pleasant.

4. Especially when *Desire* is accompanied with *Hope*. All the Pleasures of this world, are far short of affording that Rest and quiet to the soul, as the *Hope* of Glory doth to the believer. O happy soul that is acquainted by experience, with the lively Hopes of the everlasting Happiness! It is not the Hope of corruptible Riches, nor of a fading inheritance, but of the Crown that fadeth not, and of the precious, certain, durable treasure! It is not a Hope in the promise of a deceitful man, but in the word of the everliving God! The soul that hath this Anchor, needs not be tossed with those fears and cares and anxieties of mind, that worldly men are subject to. This Hope will never make them ashamed. If a man were in a consumption, or sentenced to Death, would not the Hopes of Life, upon certain Grounds, be pleasanter to him, then sport, or mirth, or trifling objects, or any such present sensitive delights? Much more if with the hopes of *Life*, he had the hopes of all the *felicities* of Life, and of the *perpetuity* of all these? O may I but be enabled by faith to lift up the eye of my soul to God, and view the everlasting mansions, and by hope to take possession of them, and say, All this is mine in Title, even upon the Promise of the faithful God! what greater Pleasure can my soul possess, till it enter on the full Possession of those eternal Pleasures! O poor deluded worldly men! What is the Pleasure of your wealth to this? O brutish sinners! what is the Pleasure of your mirth and jollity, your meat and drink, your pride and bravery, your lust and filthiness in comparison of this! O poor Ambitious dreaming men, that make such a stir for the Honour and Greatness of this world! What is the Pleasure of your Idol-honour, and short vainglory in comparison of this! while you have it, you have no Hope of *Keeping* it: you are troubled with the thought of leaving it: Had we no higher Hopes then yours, how miserable shold we be?

5. The *Trust* and *repose* of the soul on God, which is another part of the life of grace, is exceeding *Pleasant* and *quieting* to the soul. To find that we stand upon a *Rock*, and that under us

are the everlasting arms, and that we have so full security for our salvation, as the promise and Oath of the immutable God, what a stay, what a *Pleasure* is this to the Believer? The troubles of the godly are most from the remnants of their unbelief: The more they believe, the more they are comforted and established: The life of faith is a Pleasant life. Faith could not conquer so many enemies, and carry us through so much suffering and distress, as you find in that cloud of testimonies, *Heb.* 11. if it were not a very comfortable work. Even we that see not the salvation ready to be revealed, may yet greatly rejoice, for all the manifold temptations, that for a season make us subject to some heavyness, *1 Pet.* 1. 5, 6. And we that see not Jesus Christ, yet Believing can love him and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, v. 8. The God of Hope doth sometimes fill his servants with all Joy and peace in believing, and makes them even abound in Hope through the Power of the Holy Ghost, *Rom.* 15. 13.

6. Yea Joy is it self a part of the *Holy* qualification of the Saints, and of the renewed state that grace hath brought them into. For the Kingdom of God consisteth as in Righteousness, so in Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost, *Rom.* 14. 17. Believers receive not the spirit of bondage again to fear, that is, they are not under the bondage of the Law, nor have the spirit or state of mind which is suited to those Legal impositions and terrible comminations: but they have received the spirit of Adoption by which they cry *Abba Father*, that is, As they are brought under a more gracious dispensation, and a better Covenant and promises, and God is revealed to them in the Gospel as a Reconciled Father through his son, so doth he treat them more gently as reconciled children, and the spirit which answereth this gracious Covenant, and is given us therupon, doth qualify us with a child-like disposition, and cause us with boldness, Love and confidence, to call God Father, and fly to him for succour and supply, in all our dangers and necessities. And how Pleasant it must be to a believing soul, to have this spirit of Adoption, this childlike Love and confidence, and freedom with the Lord, methinks you might conjecture, though its sensibly known by them only that enjoy it, *Gal.* 5. 22. The fruit of the spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, &c.] when the word is first received by Believers, though it may be in much affliction, through the persecutions and cross the

attent.

attend the Gospel, yet is it ordinarily *in the Joy of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Thes. 1. 6. The Holy Ghost is the Comforter of true Believers: And if he have taken it upon him as his work, he will surely do it, in the degree and season fittest for them. And if Joy it self be part of the state of Grace and Holiness, you may see that it is the most delightful Pleasant course.

7. Yea that we may have a Pleasant and comfortable life, the Lord hath forbidden our distracting cares and fears and doubts, and our inordinate sorrows; and commanded us to cast our care on him, and promised to care for us, 1 Pet. 5. 7. and he hath bid us be careful for nothing, but in all things make our wants known to him, Phil. 4. 6. And can there be a course of life more Pleasant than that which dost consist in faith, and Love, and hope, and Joy, that's built on God, and animated by him, and that excludeth inordinate cares and sorrows, as health doth sickness? where it is unlawful to be miserable and to grieve our selves, and no sorrow is allowed us, but that which tendeth to our joy; where it is made our work to *Rejoyce in the Lord*, yea always to *Rejoyce*, Phil. 4. 4. A servant or tradesman will judge of the pleasure of his life by his work. If his work be a drudgery, his life is tedious and filled with grief: If his work be Pleasant, his life is Pleasant. Judge then by this of a Holy life. Is it care, and fear, and anguish of mind that God commandeth you? no: it is these that he forbiddeth. [*Care not: Fear not*] are his injunctions, Isa. 35. 4. & 41. 10. Do you fear *Reproach*? Why, you do it contrary to the will of God, who biddeth you, [*Fear not the reproach of men*, Isa. 51. 7.] Do you fear the power and rage of enemies? Why it is contrary to your Religion so to do: God biddeth you, *Fear them not*, Isa. 43. 5, 13, 14. & 44. 2, 8. Do you fear persecution or death from the hands of cruel violence? why it is contrary to the will of God that you do so, Matt. 10. 26, 28, 31. *Fear not them which kill the body, &c.*] Blessed life! where all that is against us is forbidden: and all that is truly Joyous and delightful, and necessary to make us happy, is commanded us, and made our duty: which is contrary to misery, as life to death, and as light to darkness. Come hither poor deluded sinners that fly from care, and fear and sorrow: If you will but give up your selves to Christ, you shall be exempted from all these, except such as is necessary to your joy. You may do any thing, if you will be the servants of the Lord,

except that which tendeth to your own and other mens calamity. Come hither all you that call for pleasure, and love no life but a life of mirth. Let God be your master, and Holines your work, and Pleasure then shall be your *business* : and holy Mirth shall be your employment ; While you serve the flesh, your pleasure is small, and your trouble great : vexation is your work, and unspeakable vexation is your wages. But if you will be the hearty servants of the Lord, *Rejoycing* shall be your *work and wages* : If you understand not this, peruse your lesson, Psal. 33. 1. *Rejoyce in the Lord O ye Righteous, for Praise is comely for the upright.*] Psal. 97. 11, 12. *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart : Rejoyce in the Lord ye Righteous : and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*] Phil. 3. 1. Psal. 5. 11. [*Let all those that trust in thee rejoice : let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them : let them also that Love thy name, be joyful in thee.*] Psal. 32. 11. *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart.*] Psal. 132. 9. 16. [*Let thy Priests be cleansed with Righteousness, and let thy Saints shout for joy : 16. I will also cloath her Priests with salvation, and his Saints shall shout aloud for joy*] such precepts and promises abound in Scripture, which tell you if you will be Saints indeed, that Joy and gladness must be your *life and work*. I know objections will be stirring in your minds : But forbear them but a while, and I shall fully answer them anon.

2. I have told you wherein the *Inward* part of Holiness is *Delightful* ; I shall briefly shew you that the *Outward* part also is very *Pleasant*, and fit to feed these *inward joys*. And 1. let us view the Duties that are more directly to be performed unto God : and 2. The works of charity and righteousness unto men.

1. How sweet is it to be exercised in the *word of God* ? In hearing or reading it with serious meditation ? For the man that hath been revived by it, renewed, sanctified, saved by it, to hear that powerful heavenly truth, by which his soul was thus made new ! For the soul that is in Love with God, to hear or see his blessed name, on every leaf ! to read his will, and find the expressions of his Love, his great, eternal, wonderous love, how sweet this is, experience tells the Saints that feel it : If you that feel no sweetnes in it, believe not them that say they feel it, at least believe the *word of God*, and the professions of his ancient Saints,

psal. 119. 97. [O how I love thy Law ! it is my meditation all the day] v. 103. How sweet are thy words unto my taste & yea sweeter then the honey, and the honey-comb] v. 14. 16. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as in all riches. I will delight myself in thy statutes : I will not forget thy word] 24. [Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors] 47. [I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved, and I will meditate in thy statutes.] 72. [The Law of thy mouth is better to me then thousands of Gold and Silver.] 92. [Unless thy Law had been my delight, I had perished in my affliction] 93. I will never forget thy precepts for with them thou hast quickned me.] 111. [Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever : for they are the rejoicing of my heart] 117. I love thy commandments above Gold, yea above fine Gold :] 162. I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoile] 165. Great peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.]

I should but weary you to recite one quarter of the expressions of holy men in Scripture concerning the sweetnes and pleasures which they found, in the Law of God. In a word, it is the work and marke of the blessed man, that His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night, Psal. 1. 1, 2. Do you think that an unpleasant tedious life that doth consist in such employment ?

2. Another Holy Duty is *Prayer*, both secret, and with others, in familie, and publike Assemblies. And do you think it is a grievous tedious work, for a needy soul to beg of God, that is so ready to relieve him ? For a guilty soul to pray to God that is so ready to forgive him ? for a sinful soul to return to God, (and confess his sins, and beg for mercy,) that is so ready to meet him and entertain him ? for a loving soul to converse with God, when there is a mutual complacency between them ? Is it grievous for a child to speak to his Father ? or are you weary of the presence of your dearest friend ? What is there in holy prayer that should grieve or weary us ? save it is not his company that we speak to : For it is his presence that makes Heaven. And sure it is not the employment. For it is but asking, and asking for the best and choicest thing, and asking in our necessities for that which we must have or we are undone for ever. And is it unpleasant to pray to a bounteous God, in our necessity,

and that for the best and pleasantest things ? Perhaps there may be some of you that think it is but labour lost, and that you could better spend those hours, and that God regardeth not our prayers, and that indeed we speed never the better for them, and therefore you have no pleasure in them.] And no wonder ! If you are Atheists and believe not that there is a God, you cannot love him, or rejoice in him. If you believe not his Promises, how should they give you any comfort ! If you believe not that he regardeth Prayers, no wonder if you have no heart to pray : They that say *It is in vain to serve the Lord, and it is no profit to us to keep his ordinances*, Mal. 3. 14. will also say, *what a weariness is it !* Mal. 1. 13. and will give him but a lame and lifeless service. If you did believe your friend to be your enemy, you would have small pleasure in him : Mis-conceits may easily make you loath the things that are most delightful. The thoughts of Heaven it self yield little Pleasure to them that believe not that there is a Heaven, or what it is. The Light is not pleasant to the blind : nor any object of our easie or smell to those that have lost these senses. Is musicke unpleasant, because it delighteth not the deaf ? For shame do not charge the sweet and blessed ways of God with that which is the fruit of your own corruption. If your lungs be rotten, you may be out of breath with speaking the most delightful words, or walking in the most pleasant fields or gardens ; But the cause of the weariness is within you. If you have the hearts of Infidels, or graceless stupid worldly sinners, you are so unfit to approach the most Holy God in holy prayer, that I marvel not if you go to it as a Bear to the stake, as an Ox to the yoke, or as an offender to the stocks ; For the God that you pray to, is a hater of all the workers of iniquity, and a consuming fire ; and therefore no wonder if his terrors should meet you and leave you but little delight in prayer (Though its wonder that they do not follow you, and meet you in all your ways, and leave you less delight in the omission of it) But if you had the hearts of believing holy men, and had tasted in prayer what they have tasted, and had their experience of the success, you would then be easily persuaded that prayer is neither a *Vain* nor an *unpleasant* work. Surely it is not unpleasant to a burdened soul to dis-burden it self before the Lord : nor to a sinner that hath felt the weight, the smart, the sting of sin, to cry for mercy, and healing to him that is able and willing to shew mercy ; nor is

it unpleasant for him that knows the worth of grace and glory, to lie upon his knees in begging them of the Lord. All those that have felt how good it is to draw near to God, had rather have leave to pray in hope, then to please their senses with any delights that earth affordeth. There is force in Prayer (through the grace that hath appointed and doth accompany it) to procure comfort to the distressed mind, and safety to them that are in danger, relief to them that are in want, and strength to them that are in weakness. Prayer is good for all things that are good; and good against all things that are evil. It is good against temptations, dangers, enemies and sin: It is good against sorrows, fears, and cares: yea against poverty, shame and sickness. For the God that Prayer goes to, and makes use of, is sufficient against all, and our only help. Turn away now from God if you dare, and cast off earnest constant Prayer, as if it were a tedious unpleasant thing! but be sure the time is coming when thou, even thou that thus despisest it, wilt betake thy self to Prayer, and cry Lord, Lord, when it is too late, or when anguish and terrorre seise upon thee. Sickness, and death, and the terrors of the Lord will teach thee to pray, as *useless* and *tedious* as now you think it: Yea and teach you to do it *earnestly*, that now put off all with a few frozen heartless words. But O it is *seasonable* believing prayer that is *comfortable*: It is the prayer of *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Hope* that is *pleasant*: but the prayer of too late repentance in Hell, and the prayer of despair and horrour, that can not procure a drop of water, afford no pleasure, as they procure no relief.

3. Another duty that Holiness consisteth in, is *Thanksgiving* and *Praise* to the God of our salvation. He that knows not that this work is *Pleasant*, is unacquainted with it. If there be any thing *Pleasant* in this world, it is the praises of God, that flow from a believing, loving soul, that is full of the sense of the mercies, and goodness, and excellencies of the Lord; Especially, the *maximum conjunction* of such souls, in the high praises of God in the holy Assemblies. Is it not pleasant, even to Name the Lord! to mention his Attributes! to remember his great and wondrous works! to magnifie him that rideth on the Heavens, that dwelleth in the light that cannot be approached, that is cloathed with Majesty and Glory, that infinitely surpasseth the Sun in its brightness; that hath his Throne in the Heavens, and the Heaven-

of Heavens cannot contain him ; and yet he delighteth in the humble soul, and hath respect to the contrite, yea dwells with them that tremble at his Word. Is any thing so pleasant as the Praises of the Lord ! How sweet is it to see and praise him as the Creator, in the various wonderful creatures which he hath made ! How pleasant to observe his works of providence, to them that read them by the light of the Sanctuary, and in Faith and Patience learn the interpretation, from him that only can interpret them. But O how unspeakably Pleasant is it to see the *Father in the Son* ; and the *God-head in the manhood* of our Lord, and the *Riches of Grace in the glass* of the holy *Gospel*, and the *manifold wisdom of God in the Church*, where the Angels themselves disdain not to behold it ! *Ephes. 3. 10, 11.* The praising of God for the incarnation of his Son, was a work that a choir of Angels were employed in as the instructors of the Church, *Luke 2. 13, 14.* There is not a promise in the book of God, nor one passage of the Life and Miracles of Christ, and the rest of the History of the Gospel, nor one of the holy works of the spirit upon the soul, nor one of those thousand mercies to the Church, or to our selves, or friends, that infinite Goodness doth bestow, but contain such matter of Praise to God, as might fill believing hearts with Pleasure, and find them most delightful work : Much more when *all these* are at once before us, what a feast is there for a gracious Soul !

O you befooled fleshly minds, that find no pleasure in the things of God, but had rather be drinking, or gaming, or scraping in the world, awaken your souls and see what you are doing ! With what eyes do you see, with what hearts do you think of the Works, and Word, and Wayes of God, and of the Holy employments that you are so much against ! For my own part, I freely and truly here profess to you, that I would not exchange the *Pleasure* that my soul enjoyeth in *this one piece* of the holy *Work of God*, for all your mirth, and sport, and gain, and whatever the world and sin affords you : I would not change the delights which I enjoy, in *one* of these *holy dayes and duties*, in the mentioning of the eternal God, and celebrating his praise, and magnifying his Name, and thinking, and speaking of the riches of his Love, and the glory of his Kingdom, no not for all the pleasure of your lives. O that your souls were cured of those *dangerous diseases*, that make you loath the *sweetest things* ! You would

would then know what it is that you have set light by, and would marvail at your selves, that you could taste no sweetness in the sweetest things ! Can you think that your work or your play, your profits or your sports, are comparable for pleasure to the Praises of the Lord ! If Grace had made you competent Judges, I am sure you would say, There is no comparison. Hear but the testimony of a holy soul, yea of the Spirit of God by him. [Psal. 147. 1. *Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing Praises to our God: for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.* Psalm 149. 1, 2. *Praise ye the Lord: sing unto the Lord a new song: and his Praise in the Congregation of Saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him, let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautifie the meek with salvation. Let the Saints be joyful in Glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high Praises of God be in their mouth, &c.*] Psalm. 95. 1, 2, 3. *O come let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise in the rock of our salvation: Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise to him with Psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods.*] Psalm 96. 1, 2, 3, 4. *O sing unto the Lord a new song: Sing unto the Lord all the earth. Sing unto the Lord: bless his Name: Praise forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the Heathen; his wonders among all people: For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised — Honour and Majesty are before him, strength and beauty are in his Sanctuary.*] Did not this holy Prophet find it a pleasant work to Praise the Lord ? Yea all that Love the Name of God should be Joyful in him, Psalm 5. 11. Every one of his upright ones may say with the Prophet, Isa. 61. 10. *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord: My soul shall be joyful in my God: For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robes of righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth springs forth her bud, and as the Garden causeth the things sown in it to spring forth: so the Lord will cause Righteousness and Praise to spring forth before all the Nations.*] It is a promise of Joy that is made in Isa. 56. 6, 7, 8. *To the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the Name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my Covenant: Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful.*

in my House of Prayer.] What a joyful thing is it to a gracious soul, when he may see the reconciled face of God, and feel his Fatherly reviving Love, and among his Saints may speak his Praise, and proclaim his great and blessed name, even in his Temple, where every man speaketh of his Glory ! *Psalm 29. 9.* If the *Proud* are delighted in their own praise, how much more will the *humble* *holy soul*, be delighted in the *Praise of God* ! When the *Love of God* is *shed abroad in the heart*, and *Faith* doth set us as before his *Throne*, or at least doth somewhat withdraw the *veil*, and shew us him that lives for ever, and when the force of *Love* doth open our lips, that our mouthes may shew forth his praise, it is pleasant both to *God* and us. The *Lord* himself doth put on *joy*, as delighting in his peoples *praise*; and when they joyn *obedience* with *holy worship*, they are pleasant in his eyes, *Jer. 9. 24.* *Isa. 62. 4.* & *42. 1.* *Zeph. 3. 17.* *He meeteth him that Rejoyceth and worketh righteousness, and that remembers him in his wayes.* *Isa. 64. 5.* Would you taste of the sweetest life on earth ? Learn then to *Delight your selves in God*. Do you want *recreation* ? Be acquainted with his *Praise*. Is there not a better cure for *Melancholy* here among the servants of the *Lord*, than in an *Ale-house*, or in the company of *transgressors* ? Their carnal pleasures are ~~un~~wholesom for you, like *luscious fruits* that will make you sick : But the delights of *Faith* are safe and healthful. *Fleshy pleasure* is *windy and deceitful*, and *weakeneth and befools* the soul : But the *joy of the Lord* is *our strength*, *Neb. 8. 10.* A *little* may be in much of *fleshy pleasures*, and it is of very *hard digestion*, and leaves that behind that spoils the sport : But the further you go in the *Delights of Faith*, the better they are, and the *sweeter* you will find them. You may quickly catch a *dangerous surfe* of your *fleshy pleasures*; but of *spiritual Delights*, the *more, the better*: For they are *curing, reviving*, and much *confirm and exalte* the soul. Our *spiritual pleasures* are *so heavenly*, and have so much of *God and Glory* in them, that they must needs prepare the soul for *heaven*, and be excellent helps to our *salvation*.

O therefore if you would live a *Pleasant life*, draw near to *God*, and by *Faith* behold him, and by *Love* adhere to him, and take a view of his infinite *Goodness* and all his *perfections*; and behold him in his *wonderous works*, and then break forth into his *cheerful praises*, and you shall taste such *pleasures* as the earth affordeth not. Launch forth into the *boundless Ocean of Eternity*,

q, and let your hearts and tongues expatiate in the Praise of the Heavenly Majesty, and use this work and ply it close, and be not too *idle*, or *customary*, or *careless* in it, and you shall find the difference between the *Pleasures of Faith* and of the *flesh*, of a *Holy* and of a *sensual life*, Psalm 135. 2, 3. *Ye that stand in the House of the Lord, in the Courts of the House of our God: Praise the Lord, for the Lord is Good: sing praises to his Name, for it is pleasant.*] Psal. 71. 8. *Let my mouth be filled with thy Praise, and with thy honour all the day.*] Psal. 96. 2. 6. *Sing unto the Lord; let his name; show forth his salvation from day to day. Honour and Majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his Sanctuary.*]

0 that the Lord will but *shine* upon my soul with the *Light* of his *countrance*, and *open* my heart to the entertainment of his *Love*, and hold a *gracious Communion* with my soul, by his *holy* *spirit*, and *keep open* these doors to me, and *continue* this *liberty* of his *House* and *Ordinances* which we *enjoy* this day, that I may *join* with a *faithful* *humble* *people*, in *holy Communion*, and in *Praise* and *Worship*, and that with a *heart* that is *suitable* to *the works* ! I shall then say with *David*, Psal. 16. 6. *The lines of salat to me in pleasant places, I have a goodly heritage. I will not for no greater pleasures, or honours, or advancement in this world ! Let who will surfeit on the pleasures of the *flesh* ! Here both my soul delight to dwell ! Psalm 27. 4, 5, 6. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the daies of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his haly Temple: For in the time of trouble he will bide me in his pavillion, & in the secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me up upon a Rock: And then, shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies: round about are they that will I offer in his Tabernacle sacrifices of joy: I will sing, yea will sing Praises to the Lord.*] Till I come to the promised Everlasting *Pleasures*, I shall ask of God no greater *Pleasures*. These abide as much as my soul in the prison of *flesh* can bear. Till home to the Land of Promise, I may I but have thefe *inflant* of *joy* in my present *Wilderness*, I shall not repine. My heart shall be glad, and my glory shall rejoice, and no death, my gloomy gloomie hope. For as the Lord now sheweth me the *path* of his *presence* is full of *joy*, and at his right hand are *all* *my* *merits*, Rich *Abundant*, and *all* *my* *merits*, Rich *Abundant*, and *all* *my* *merits*, Rich *Abundant*.*

4. Another Pleasant Holy Duty, is, Our holy Communion with Christ and his Church in the Lord's Supper.

This is a holy Feast that is purposely provided by the King of Saints, for the entertainment of his family; for the refreshing of the weary, and the making glad the mournful soul. The night before his bitter Death, he instituted this Sacramental Feast! He caused his Disciples to sit down with him, and when they had partaken of the Passover, the Sacrament of Promise, and had their taste of the old wine, he giveth them the New, even the Sacrament of the better Covenant, and of the fuller Gospel-Grace: He teacheth them that his Death is Life to them: and that which is his bitterest suffering, is their Feast: and his Sorrows are their Joys; as our sinful pleasures were his sorrows. The slain Lamb of God our Passover that was sacrificed for us, that taketh away the sins of the world, was the pleasant food; which Sacramentally he himself then delivered to them, and substantially the next day offered for them. *The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world, John 6.33. He is the Living Bread which came down from Heaven: If any man eat of the Bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that he giveth is his flesh, which he hath given for the life of the world, ver. 50. 51. Except we eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us: Who so eateth his flesh and drinketh his blood, hath Eternal life, and he will raise him up at the last day: For his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed: He that eateth his flesh, and drinketh his blood, dwelleth in Christ, and Christ in him: As the Living Father hath sent the Son, and he liveth by the Father, so he that eateth him, shall live by him. This is that bread which cometh down from Heaven: nor as the Fathers did eat Manna and are dead: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever.]*

I know that to an unbelieving carnal wretch, the Sacrament is but a common thing. For Christ himself and his Gospel is not better in his eyes. He discerneth not the Lord's body: He quieteth and deludeth his conscience with the outward form. He hath not faith to feed on Christ: But to a lively faith, what sweetnes doth such a Feast afford?

We have here Communion with the blessed Trinity, in three parts of this Eucharistical Sacrament! As the Father, both our Creator and the glorified Majesty, and yet he hath his Son to be our Redeemer; so in the first part, which

the **CONSECRATION**, we present to our Creator the creatures of Bread and Wine, acknowledging that from him we receive them and all, and we desire that upon our Dedication, by his Acceptance, they may be made **Sacramentally** and **Representatively** the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

In the second part of the Eucharist, which is the **COMMEMORATION** of the sacrifice offered on the Cross, we break the bread and pour forth the wine, to Represent the breaking of Christ's Body, and shedding of his Blood for the sin of man; and we beseech the Father to be Reconciled to us on his Sons account, and to accept us in his Beloved, and to accept all our sacrifices through him. So that as Christ now in Heaven, is Representing his sacrifice to the Father, which he once offered on the Cross for sin, so must the Minister of Christ Represent and *plaid to the Father the same sacrifice by way of Commemoration*, and such *Intercession* as belongeth to his Office.

The third part of the Eucharist is the **OFFER** and **PARTICIPATION**: in which the Minister Representing Christ, doth by *Commission deliver his Body and Blood to the penitent, hungry, believing soul*! and with Christ is delivered a sealed *ardon of all sin*, and a *sealed gift of life Eternal*. All which are received by the true Believer.

An unbeliever knoweth not what transactions there are between the Lord and a holy soul in this Ordinance, where the appearances are so small. A bit of bread and a sup of wine are indeed small matters: But so is not this Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. What a comfort is it that the Glorified Majesty will accept a sacrifice at our hands, and enter a treaty of Peace with the offendours? Yea that he will provide the sacrifice himself, and the preciousest in the whole world: that he will signify this his acceptance of the sacrifice, and how he is pleased in his well-beloved Son! and that he accepteth his Sons intercession in the Heavens, and his Ministers intercession, and the Churches prayers on earth through Christ! Seeing Christ will be glorified with his Father, and not continue visible among us, could we desire more from him, then the three-fold *Representation* which he hath left behind him, to supply the room of his bodily presence? Even the Representation of himself by his Son, by his Ministers, and by the Holy Ghost, which is *no inconsiderable witness* for the efficacy of all. O what unspeakable

mysteries and treasures of *mercy* are here presented to us in a Sacrament ! Here we have Communion with a Reconciled God, and are brought into his presence by the great Reconciler. Here we have Communion with our blessed Redeemer, as Crucified, and Glorified, and offered to us, as our quickning, preserving, strengthening Head : Here we have Communion with the Holy Ghost, applying to our souls the benefits of Redemption, drawing us to the Son, and communicating light, and life, and strength from him unto us : increasing and actuating his graces in us. Here we have Communion with the *Body of Christ*, his *sanctified people*, the heirs of life : When the Minister of Christ by his Commission *Representeth a Crucified Christ to our eyes*, by the Bread and Wine appointed to this use, we see Christ Crucified as it were before us ; and our Faith layeth hold on him, and we perceive the Truth of the Remedy ; and build our souls upon this Rock. When the same Minister by Christ's Commission, doth *offer us his Body, and Blood, and Benefits*, it is as firm and valid to us, as if the mouth of Christ himself had offered them : And when our souls *Receive him*, by that Faith which the Holy Ghost exciteth in us, the participation is as true as that of our bodies receiving the Bread and Wine which represent him. O do but ask a drooping soul, that mourns under the fears of God's displeasure, how he would value a voice from Heaven, to tell him that all his sins are pardoned, and that he is dear to God, and judge by his answer, what is contained and offered in a Sacrament ! Ask him how he would take it, if Christ should speak those words himself to him, which he hath given his Minister Commission in his name to speak ? [*Take, eat, this is my Body, which is broken for you*] It is the same Christ, the same pardon, and salvation, that is offered us by the *Messengers of Christ*, and which he personally offered himself to his *Disciples*. When you must all appear at the Barr of God, O what would you not give for a sealed pardon, which in a *Sacrament* is given freely now, to the believing soul ! Judge now by this, whether it be a *Joyous Ordinance* ! When the poorest Christian this day receiveth, that which the greatest Prince that is ungodly, would then give all the world for if he had it. For want of that pardon, Christian, which thou must now receive, many thousands will tremble at the *barr of God*, and be overwhelmed with his wrath for ever ! And a soul that groaneth under the languishings of his grace, and the burden

burden of any strong corruption, how he would value the mortifying and quickning grace of the Holy Ghost, that would break his bonds, and give him light and life and strength; and by his answer judge of the value of a Sacrament. We have here the greatest mercies in the world, brought down to us in sensible Representations, that they might be very neer us, and the means might be suited to the frailty and infirmity of our present state.

If the sealed message of Gods Reconciliation with us, and a sealed pardon of all our sins; and a sealed grant of Everlasting life, be not more pleasant and desirable to your thoughts, then all that earth and flesh can yield you, it is because your are alive to sin, and dead to God, and want that spiritual sence and appetite, by which you might be competent judges. If God, if Christ, if grace, if the forerasts of glory can afford no pleasure to the soul, then *Heaven it self* would not be pleasant. But *these* are sweet, the Sacrament is sweet that doth convey them.

Well, poor stubborn carnal sinners! you have been invited to this feast as well as others! we are sent to call you, and even compel you to come in (though upon the terms and in the way of Christ!) but you have no great list; but somewhat else doth please you better! And will it prove better indeed to you at the end? Well, take your own choice! If an Alehouse be better then the Table of the Lord; if your merry companions do please you better then the Communion of the Saints, or if you cannot submit to the order and discipline of the family of Christ, that you may partake of his provision, you may follow your own corrupt desires, and see whither they will lead you! But here it is that I shall choose my pleasures till I reach the everlasting pleasures. And though in this low communion of imperfect Saints, we see but in a glasse, and have but some small imperfect taste of the glorious things which Hope expecteth; yet this is more then all that earth and flesh can yield: and it is most perfect Pleasure that by these is revealed, sealed, and Represented. Sacraments can assure us of perfect joys, though they give us but little joy in hand.

Obj. But if Sacraments be so pleasant, why then (saith a disconsolate soul,) have I found no more pleasure or comfort in them? Even in the soul that's made alive by Grace, diseases may

much corrupt the appetite, and make the sweetest thing seem bitter. Are not Sacraments sweet to you? and do you not delight in the communion of God and of his Saints? I will not say much to you, lest it seem degressive, but briefly ask you these few Questions.

1. Are the thoughts of God, of Christ, of Heaven sweet to you? If they be, me thinks the Ordinances should be sweet. If they be not, its no wonder that you set light by Sacraments, if you can set light by Christ and heaven it self.

Quest. 2. Is not sin grown sweet to you? If it be, the ordinances will not be sweet: no nor unless your sins grow bitter.

Quest. 3. Doth not the world grow sweet to you, and your condition or expectations, and your thriving state, more pleasant to you then heretofore? If so, no wonder if Sacraments and all spiritual things, do lose their sweetnes.

Quest. 4. Have you been faithful in your preparation, by free confession, true humiliation, strong resolution, hungering and thirsting after Christ, and all this furthered by diligent self-examination? An unprepared soul must blame it self, if it find not the sweetnes of the Ordinance. The holy appetite and relish, that is necessary to your Delight, must be stirred up much in your Preparations.

Quest. 5. Are you careful and conscientiable, humble and holy in your lives? If you neglect God in your ordinary conversations, and walk not with him on other daies, you are unlike to meet him comfortably here. And if you are slight and careless in your ordinary duties, you will find here that God took notice of it.

Quest. 6. Do you faithfully endeavour to exercise Faith, Repentance, Love and all Sacramental Graces in the use of the ordinances? You come not to a mere receiving but to a Work. Have your souls been adorned with the wedding garment? and do you come higher for a meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you see him by faith, and take all that is here Represented to you, as if you had seen the things themselves? Do you remember that your Lord is coming, and do you lift up your heads in the expectation of your Redemption, and do this in remembrance of him till he come? An idle loyering in Gods work is not the way to find the sweetnes of it.

Clement Alexandrinus Strom. l. 2. init. gives it as a Reason why every one took his own part of the Bread of the Sacrament in those times, because man being a free agent must be the chooser or refuser of his own happiness: The Papists on the contrary do but gape, and the Priest doth pop the bread into their mouths (having first persuaded them that it is not bread.) Do you not expect to receive the spiritual benefits, just as the Papists do receive the Bread? as if you had nothing to do but gape? As if your presence here were as much as is to be expected from you for your edification! How can you taste the sweetness that is offered, when you do not exercise your spiritual senses.

Quest. 7. Do you exercise faith, as well as feeling, in judging of the benefit of Sacraments? Pardon, and Justification, and Title to Salvation are benefits which in themselves you cannot feel. It is by *Believing the promise* that you must know them. If God have promised a blessing on his Ordinance, it is sure to the faithful soul as if we felt it, though perhaps we may feel long without it. *Heaven* it self which is the principal end of Ordinances, will not be attained in this life: and yet the Ordinance is not in vain.

Quest. 8. Have you the true understanding of the use of Sacraments? of the abundant Love that is here let forth? and the freeness and fulness of the Promise here sealed? If not, no wonder if you taste not the sweeteness, when you know not how to break the shell, that you may feed on the kernel of the Ordinances.

Quest. 9. Have you not troubled your own souls, and muddied your comforts by *cautious* doubts and ignorant scruples, about the gestures, or manner, or persons that you joyned with, or some such circumstances as these? If so, no marvel if you lose the comfort.

Quest. 10. Or at least, have you not been negligent in the review and after improving of the Ordinances? and have you not thought that all was done when you had received? Any one of these miscarriages may make this pleasant duty bitter, or at least deprive you of the most of the delight. But if your hearts be fixed to the work, and you deprive not your selves of the chief consolation, you shall find that God deals bountifully with you, and will feast you even with Angels.

3. The publike worship being all thus sweet, how sweet are the *Lords days*, these holy seasons that are wholly consecrated to this work? How light is the Christian, that hath this day cast off his worldly cares and busyness and cogitations, and hath set himself apart for God, as if there were no world to mind? On the *week days* he doth walk with God: But so that his necessary worldly busyness doth frequently divert and distract his mind. But what a sweet and happy day is this, when he may strip himself of these distractions, as he doth of his work-day courier cloaths, and may wholly apply himself to God? As the Bee goes from flower to flower, labouring at all, but with a Pleasant labour, to gather Honey, and prepare for winter; so doth the Christian, especially on the *Lords day*, employ himself in labour and delight; and the more he laboureth, the more is his delight: From *Prayer* he goeth to *Reading*; and to the *instructing by family*, if he be a superior; or learning if he be an inferior and have helps: From *private worship* to *publike*; and from *publike to private again*; and gathering Honey (food and sweetnes) to his soul from all.

Tell me you childish brutish wantons; Do you think in your heart, that you have as much solid joy and pleasure, in a *play day*, or in your *idle games*, or in spending the *Lords day* in *idleness or sports*, as we have in the *holy works of God*? Do you think our Delight is not more then yours? To our shame, but to the praise of God, we must say, that we have tryed both ways. We know what it is to *play away* much of the *Lords day*, and what it is to *employ it in* waiting on the Lord. But since we knew the later, we wish we had never known the former. That's our recreation which is your toile: and that would be our prison, and stocks, and toile, which is your sport and recreation.

6. Another Delightful portion of our work, is *Holy Conference* with the experienced servant of the Lord. There are many things considerable in *holy conference* that maketh it delightful.

1. It is the conference of *dear friends*: the *special Love* that all the Godly have to one another, doth exceedingly sweeten their communion. The very *presence* of those that we most dearly love, is a pleasure to us: Much more their sweet and有益 discourse.

2. Their conference proceedeth from the spirit of grace, and therefore is gracious,avouring of that spirit : and all the breathings and manifestations of that blessed spirit, are very acceptable to those that have the spirit themselves, and so can favour spiritual things.

3. Their conference is about the *biggest*, the *most necessary*, the *most excellent* things : About the most Blessed God and his several *Attributes* ; his *Will*, and *works*, of *Creation*, and *disposing-Providence*, of *nature* and *Grace* ; about the wonderful *mysteries* of *Redemption*, the *person*, *life* and *sufferings* of the *Redeemer*, his *Officer* and the *performance* of them, on *earth*, and in *Heaven*, in his *Humiliation* and his *Exaltation* ; and of the sweet *Relations* that we and all his *Church* do stand in, to *Christ our Head*, our *Saviour* and *Redeemer* ; as also about the gracious workings of the *Holy Ghost*, in first *begetting* and *increase* of *holiness* ; To open to each other the powerful workings of that *Grace* that hath raised them above all the *creatures*, and brought them to a *contempt* of *earthly glory*, and set their hearts on the *invisible God*, and on *eternal things*, that hath renewed them in the *inner man*, and made them hate the *things they loved*, and mortified their *oldest strongest sins*, and quickned them in the *exercise* of every *grace* ; all this is edifying sweet discourse to gracious souls.

4. And the rather because it is about the most *pertinent affairs* : They are things that do so *neerly concern us*, that we are glad to speak with those that understand them. It is *our own case*, which we hear our brethren open : They speak our *very hearts*, as if they had seen them ; because it is the same work of the same spirit that they describe. Yea when they complain of their *Infirmities*, it is with our *complaints*, and they tell us of that which we are troubled with our *selves* ; and we perceive that we are not singular in our *troubles*, but that our *case* is the *case* of other *servants of the Lord*.

5. And it is the more pleasant to converse with the *Godly*, because they speak not by *hearsay only*, but by *experience* : They tell us of the *discoveries* that illuminating *grace* hath made to their *own souls* ; and of the many *evils* they have been *saved from* ; and the *communion* they have had with *God*, and the *prayers* which he hath heard, and the many and great *deliverances* he hath granted them ; They relate their *conflicts* with *temptations*,

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and their conquests ; their strivings against their ancient lusts, and how they have overcome them ; and the sweet refreshings which their souls have had in the exercise of Love, and faith, and hope ! They can dive into the Ocean of mercy, and speak of the abundant kindness of the Lord, and earnestly awaken and invite each other to praise him for his Goodness, and to declare his wonderous works for the children of men ; They can direct each other in their difficulties, and encourage each other in holy ways, and strengthen one another in holy resolutions, and comfort one another with the same comforts that they themselves have been comforted with by the Lord ! And may not our hearts rejoice and burn within us, while we discourse of such important things as these, in such a *serious, experimental, edifying manner* ? They can discourse together of their meeting before the throne of Christ, and of the blessed converse which they shall have in Heaven, with the Lord himself, and with the holy Angels, and where they shall be, and what they shall do, to all eternity, in the presence of God where is fulness of joy, and before him where are the eternal pleasures.

O Christians, did not your graces languish by your own neglects, and your souls grow out of relish with these spiritual and most excellent things, your speeches of them would be more savoury ; you would be more frequent, lively, and cheerful in your discourse of holy things ; and then your converse would be more edifying and delightful to each other. We shew so little of *Grace* in our conference, that makes it to be but little different from other mens ; And (which is the commonest case, and very doleful) we most of us remain so ignorant and imprudent, that we marr holy conference by our mixtures of *unwise expressions*, and disgrace it to others by our *injudicious weakness* : This is the bane of Christian discourse ; even the want of *holy skill* and *wisdom*, and of understanding to speak of the things of God, according to their transcendent worth and weight, as much (and more) then the want of *zeal*. But if we could discourse of these holy matters aright, with *wisdom* and with *seriousness*, how sweet, how fruitful would the company of holy persons be ! We should be still among them, as in the family of God, and should hear that which our souls do most desire to hear ; and we should preach to one another the riches of grace in our familiar discourse ; and souls might be converted by the conference

of Believers, and not all left to the publike ministry : Every man would be a helper to his neighbour. *For the tongue of the just is a choice silver, though the heart of the wicked is little worth : the lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for want of wisdom, Prov. 10. 20, 21. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, Prov. 15. 7. Righteous lips are the delights of Kings, Prov. 16. 13. and the sweetnes of the lips increaseth learning, v. 21. The lips of Knowledge are a precious Jewel, Prov. 20. 15. A mans belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth, and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled, Prov. 18. 20. The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgement ; the Law of his God is in his heart, Psal. 37. 30, 31.*

Tell me I beseech you, you that can be so merry in an Ale-house, or in any vain and idle company, why should you think that it is not to us a far sweeter thing to talk of holy edifying matters, then it is to you to talk of vanity ? Is the *subject* of your discourse more fit to delight a man of *wisdom* ? Do you talk of better things then *God*, or of higher things then *Heaven* ? or of things that nearlyer concern you, then the matters of everlasting consequence ?

When I have heard such people talking and laughing, as if they had been the merryest people in the world, I have sometimes hearkened to their discourse, to hear what talk it was that made them so merry ; and it hath been nothing but impertinency and folly, like a mans talking in his sleep ; enough to make a mans head ake to hear them : I should be quickly tired with their delights : The blowing of the wind, or the falling of the rain, or as Solomon saith, the crackling of thorns in the fire, hath *as much* in it to please my ear, and much less to displease it, then such mens discourse.

Go to a company of *merry fellows*, as you take them, and to a company of *serious, godly, prudent people*, and secretly write down all the words that you hear from both companies ; and read them over together when you come home, and tell me which is the *pleasanter discourse*. What a hodg-podge of non-sense, impertinency, levity, immodesty, worldliness, pride, and folly shall you find in one ; and what favourly, necessary, edifying, encouraging and comforting speeches will you find you have gathered from the other !

It is far pleasanter to be among the singing birds, the bleating

sheep, yea the chattering daws, then these idle, prating, foolish companions. For with the former you shall have some natural goad, without any mixture of *sinful evil* : But in foolish, prating company, what shall you perceive, but how *Nature* is depraved, how sinners are beside themselves, how Satan doth besoal them, and how God is forgotten while he is present with them, and they are laughing in the Devils chains, and at the very brink of death and hell ! And can a man be merry to hear such mirth as this ? It is a sad spectacle to see men *laugh in Bedlam* : but much more to see them merry in the fetters of *their sin*, and under the threatenings and wrath of God. Were you but men of right composed minds, I durst referre it to your selves, whether holy company and discourse be not like to be much *pleasant* then yours.

Do you think that the discourse of *Learned men*, about Arts and Sciences, History and the like, is not more *pleasant* then your *idle talk* ? Much more is the *holy discourse* of *Saints* about the things of their salvation. Whether do you think the company and discourse of *Christ*, and his *Prophets* and *Apostles*, or of your *merry companions*, should be the more delightful ? Can you for shame say, that the *later were the best* ? Why, you know that *Christ*, and his *Prophets* and *Apostles*, had no such *idle talk* as yours. It was *holy things* that they discoursed of.

Can you for shame say that you *Love God above all*, and yet have more pleasure in prating over a pot of Ale, then in speaking reverently of God ? Or would you be believed when you say, that your hearts are set on Heaven, when you have more delight in talking of any earthly triffe ? Well ! I shall leave it to your *consciences*, and to the judgement of any that will speak with *Reason*, whether the *holy converse* and *conference* of the godly, be not in it self a more *Delightful* thing, then all the merriments, the dotages and fooleries of the ungodly. If you think not so, it is because your relish and appetite is depraved, the Devil hath deluded you, and sin bereayed you of your wits.

2. I have told you of the *Pleasantness* of the *Duties of Holiness*, which are to be performed more directly toward God. Let us now consider of the rest of a *Christian life* : Which consisteth in our *duties* to be performed towards men : And these are all comprehended in the works of *Charity* and of *Justice*.

1. And certainly the works of *Charity* are *Delightful*. There is not a pleasanter work in the world then to do good. Even proud men find a great delight in the *Reputation* or *Name* of doing good: that they may be accounted the great *Benefactors* of the world, that is, to be as earthly gods among their neighbours, and as the Sun is to the lower world, that all may be below them, and live by their influence. This is the top of that prosperity that sinful ambition doth aspire to. And if the *Name* of *Well-doing* be so pleasant to the *Proud*, the *Conscience* of the thing it self should be more pleasant to the upright. *Open bounty* is the *hypocrites* *glory*: But to do good in *secret* is the *believers* *pleasure*; for their *Father* which seeth in *secret*, shall reward them *openly*: Yea the very delight of doing good, and especially a great or publike good, a spiritual and everlasting good, is a reward unto it self. It is the speech of Christ recited by *Paul*, *Acts* 20.35. that it is more blessed to give then to receive.

There are many things concurring that make it very *Pleasant* to do good. It proceeds from the power of *Love*: and the exercise of *Love* is pleasant. And *Love* makes our Brethren to be to us as our selves, and consequently their welfare is as our own, and rejoiceth us as if our selves received, all that they receive. And what abundant pleasure then hath a Believer? When so many thousand of his brethren, do receive so many thousand benefits daily from *God* himself: and all these are to the Christian, through the union and power of *Love*, as if he had received them all himself. But especially when he himself is the instrument of conveyance. The poor have comfort in receiving of relief; but nothing in comparison of *his* that gives it, if it be done for the sake of *Christ*, in *uprightness* of heart. A poor man receiveth from the giver perhaps but an outward small commodity: But the upright giver receiveth from *God*, the sense of his acceptance, and peace of conscience, with the promise of an everlasting recompence: A mite, or a cup of cold water, given to a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, or to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, shall certainly be rewarded, *Math. 10. 40, 41, 42.*

A true Believer is *Covered to do good*, as others are to receive it: and studyeth for opportunities of laying out his gifts and wealth for *God*, as others study to gather it for themselves. As a worldling studyeth for a good bargain, that he may grow rich; a

true Believer studyeth for opportunities to lay out that he hath for God, and to improve his Masters stock to the best advantage. The Covetous doth not more long to get more, then Believers do to be rid of that they have, in the way and on the terms, as may do most good, and be best accepted : And they are even afraid lest opportunities of doing good should over-slip them, and the feed-time should pass by : A Believer knows that, as his life and soul, so his worldly riches, are nowhere sure but in the hand of God : And therefore if they can procure his security, and get him to receive it, and return it them in Heaven with the promised advantage, they have then secured it indeed : All is lost that God hath not, in one way or other : and all is secured that he hath, and for which we have his promise. This is *Laying it up in heaven*, Matth. 6. 21. While *we keep it*, we cannot secure it from thieves: When we have disposed of it according to the Will of God, upon the warrant of his promise, it is then in *his Custody*, and then it is safe : Neither rust or moth can then corrupt it, nor the strongest thieves break through and steal. To be Good, and do Good, is to be likest unto God; and therefore must needs be the sweetest life.

2. Works of *Justice* also have their pleasure: For they demonstrate the Justice of God himself, from whom they do proceed. That which is most *Pleasant to God*, should be most *Pleasant unto us*. And as he hath bid us, *not forget to do good and to communicate*, because *with such sacrifice he is well pleased*, Heb. 13. 16. so he hath told us that he *delighteth in the exercise of loving-kindness, judgement, and righteousness in the earth*, Jer. 9. 24. He hath shewed us, *what is good: and what doth he require of us, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with our God?* Mich. 6. 8. And therefore he commandeth *Israel*, Hos. 12. 6. [*Turn thou unto thy God: Keep Mercy and Judgement: and wait on thy God continually.*] Private justice between man and man, and family-justice between parents and children, masters and servants, and Political justice between the Magistrates and the people, do all maintain the order of the world, and procure both publike and private peace. It is selfishness and injustice, tyrannie, oppression, disobedience and rebellion, that procure the miseries of the world: But Righteousness is safe and sweet.

2. You have heard of the Pleasure of *Holy Actions*, both *Internal* and *External*: The truth is evident also from the *Object* of

of these *Acts*, and the *matter from which* a believer may derive his *Pleasures*. And O what an Ocean of delight is here before us ! Were our powers, capacities and acts but answerable to the *Objects*, we should presently have the *Joys of heaven*.

1. A Believer hath the *ever blessed God himself* to derive his comforts from. He hath his *Nature and Attributes* to be his comfort : He hath his *near Relations* to afford him comfort ; and this is more then to have all the world. It is a God of Infinite Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness, that we believe in, that we Love, and Worship, and Obey. It is also a Father Reconciled to us, that hath taken us in *Covenant* to him as his people, through Jesus Christ. And where shall we find comfort if not in God ? It is in vain to look for that from any creature, that is not to be found in him. Poor worldlings ! you have nothing that is worth the having, but the crumms that fall from the childrens table. God is our *Portion*, and the world is yours : and yet you have less even in this world then we. You have the *shadow*, and we have the *substance* : You have the *shell*, and we the *kernell* : You have the *straw and chaff*, and true believers have the *corn* : Your comforts are shaken with every storm ; and tost up and down by the *Justice of God*, or the *Pride of man* : But God that is our *Portion* is *unchangeable* : Yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever : We have a *Kingdom that cannot be moved*, *Heb. 12. 28.* Persecutors cannot take our God from us, nor can any thing separate us from his Love, *Rom. 8. 36.* They may separate us from our houses, from our Countries, from our friends, from our riches, our liberties, our lives, from our Books, our company and Ordinances, but not from God, who is our great Delight. In poverty, in persecution, in sickness, and at death, we have still our interest in God : A Christian is never in so low a state, but he hath a God to whom he may go for comfort, who is more to him then your sweetest pleasures. Is it not a pleasure to have such a God as can cure all diseases, supply all wants, overcome all enemies, deliver in all dangers, and hath promised that he will do it so far as is for our good ! If he want water that hath the *Sea*, or he want land that hath all the *earth*, or he want light that hath the *Sun*, yet doth he not need to want delight that hath the *Lord* to be his *God*, if he do but keep in the *pathes of grace*. And are you yet *unresolved*, whether *Godliness be the most Pleasant Life* ? Take all your *pleasures*, and make your best of them, may

I but have the Lord to be my God, and I hope I shall never desire to change with you.

2. A Holy life is therefore *Pleasant*, because we have a *full sufficient Saviour*, from whom we may daily fetch delight. The Eternal Son of God is become the Healer of our wounds, our Peace-maker with the Father, the Conquerour of our enemies, the Ransom for our sins, the Captain of our salvation, the Head of his Church, and the Treasure of all our Hopes and Joyes! Sin and misery are the works of Satan, which Christ came into the world to destroy. If Hypocrites can steal a little Peace to their Consciences, from a false conceit that they have a part in Christ, what comfort may it be to the true Believer, that hath a sure and real interest in him! That is the sad and miserable life, when you are out of Christ, and strangers to his Covenant, and cannot say his benefits are yours, but you are yet in your sins, without his righteousness: But when we have a special interest in him, the foundation of our everlasting joy is laid, and the heart of sin and misery is broken: What fear or sorrow can you name, that I may not fetch a sufficient remedy against from Christ? What can the Prince of darkness say to our discomfort, which we may not answer by Arguments from Christ? By this judge of the Comfort of a Holy life. If the Godly over-look the Grounds of Joy, that are laid in Christ, and live in a mistaken sorrow, that is not for want of Reasons and warrant to rejoice, but for want of a right discerning of those Reasons. But what have you that are ungodly, to answer against all the terrors of the Law? or to answer against all the accusations of your consciences? or to comfort you against the remembrance of your approaching misery? While you have no part in Christ, you have no right to comfort. One thought of Christ to a believing soul, may afford more *Delight* then ever you will find in a sinful life.

3. Moreover, we have the *Holy Spirit of Christ*, that is purposely given us to be our *Comforter*: And if that be not a pleasant life that is managed by such a Guide, and that be not likeliest to be a joyful soul, that is possest by the Spirit of joy it self, there is no joy then on earth to be expected. Hath God promised his Spirit to *comfort you* that are *wicked in your sin*? No, it is the malicious deceiving spirit that is *your Comforter*: that by his comforts he might keep you from solid, spiritual, everlasting comforts;

sorts; But the Repenting, Believing soul that is united unto Christ, and hath already had the spirit for his conversion, it is he that hath the promise of the spirit for his consolation. And if that be not the most comfortable life, where the God of Heaven becomes the comforter, we cannot then know the effect by the cause. If Life it self will quicken; if light it self will illuminate; the comforting spirit will certainly comfort, in the degree and season as God seeth meet, and the soul is fitted to receive it.

4. Moreover, we have the whole treasurie of the Gospel to go to for our Delight. And little doth the sensual unbelieving soul know what sweetnes, what supporting pleasures may be from thence derived. I had rather have the holy word of God to go to for contents, then the treasures of the rich, or the pleasures of the sensual, or the flatteries and vain glory of the ambitious man: All that the world doth make such a pudder about, which they ride and run for, which they so much glory in, will never afford them so much Content, as one Scripture promise will do to a truly faithful soul. I must profess before Angels and men, that I had rather have one Promise of the Love of God, and the life to come, which is contained in the holy Scriptures, then to have all the riches, pleasures, and honours of this world. My God, this was my Covenant with thee, and to this I stand. O blessed be the Lord, that hath provided us such a Magazine of Delight as is this heavenly sacred Book! The Precepts appoint us a pleasant work: The strictest prohibitions do but restrain us from our own calamities, and keep out of our hands the knife by which we would cut our fingers: The severest threatenings do but deterre us from running into the consuming fire; and hedge about the devouring gulf, lest we should foolishly cast our selves therein. And these are the bitterest parts of that holy word. But when we read the promises of a Saviour, and the wonderful history of his Incarnation, and of his holy self-denying life, his conquests, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and his promise to return; when we read of the foundation which he hath laid, and the building which he intends to finish, of his rich abundant promises to his chosen, what provision do we find for our abundant joys! No strait can be so great, no pressure so grievous, no enemies so strong, but we have full consolation offered us in the promises, against them all. We have promises of

the pardon of all our sins, and promises of heaven it self ; and what can we have more ! we have promises suited to every state, both prosperity and adversity. What do we need which we have not a promise of ? And the word of God is no deceit. What but a promise can comfort them that are short of the possession ? May I not have more joy in sickness *with a promise*, then the *ungodly without a promise* in their health ? A promise in prison sets a man as at liberty ! A promise in Poverty is more then riches. A promise at death is better then life. What I have a promise of, I may be sure of : but what you possess without a promise, you may lose (and your souls and hopes with it) this night. There is no condition on earth so hard to a man that hath interest in the promises, in which he may not have plentiful relief. We live by *faith*, and not by *sense* ; And we reckon more on that as ours, which we *hope* for, then which we do *possess*. We are sure that there is no true felicity on earth ; It then we have a promise of Heaven, when Infidels lie down in the dust with desperation, have we not a more comfortable life then they ?

3. Moreover we have *Heaven* it self to fetch our comfort from. Not *Heaven* in sight, or in *Possession* ; but *Heaven* in *Promise*, and seen by *faith*. And if *Heaven* will not afford us pleasure, whence shall we expect it ? Even *sensual men* can rejoice as well in what they *see not*, if they are *assured* it is *theirs*, as in what they *see* : And why then may not Believers do so much more ? A worldling when he *seeth* not his money in his chest, or at use, or his lands and chattel that are far from him, can yet rejoice in them, as if he *saw them* : And should not we rejoice in the certain Hopes of *Heaven* though yet we *see it not* ? when I am pained in sickness, and role in restless weariness of my flesh, if then I can say [*I shall be in Heaven*,] may it not be the inward rejoicing of my soul ? You know where you are, but you know not where you *shall be*. The Believer knoweth where he *shall be*, as *truly* as he knoweth where he is (unless it be one that by his frailty hath not reaht unto *assurance* ; who yet hath reached unto *Hope*.) What great matter is it if I lay in greatest pain, if I can say [*I shall have everlasting ease in Heaven*] Or if I lay in prison, or in sordid poverty, and can say [*I shall shortly be with Christ*.] Or if I had lost the love of all men, and could say [*that I shall everlastingly enjoy the Love of God* ?]

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Most of your comforts do come in by the way of your thoughts. And what *Thoughts* should so rejoice the soul as the thoughts of our abode with Christ for ever? If a day in the Courts of God be so delightful, what is ten thousand millions of ages in the Court of Glory? and all then as fresh as at the first day? There it is that our sin will be put off: Our carnal enmity laid by: our temptations will be over: our enemies will all have done: our fears and sorrows will be at an end; Our desires will be accomplished: Our differences be reconciled: Our charity perfected, and our expectations fully satisfied, and Hope turned into full fruition. O may I but be able with stronger faith, and fuller confidence to say [that *Heaven is mine, and when this tabernacle is dissolved, I shall be with Christ,*] my life and my death will be delightful, and I need not complain for want of pleasure. Let who will take the pleasures of the flesh, may I but have this. In prayer, in meditation, in holy conference, in every duty, it is the expectation of approaching blessedness that drops in sweetnes into all. No wonder if it can sweeten a course of duty, when it can make light the greatest sufferings, and turn pain into pleasure, and death into life, as being *unworthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed.*

But the wicked have none of these delights, unless they steal a little by self-deceit: They may make their best of their present pleasures, and of the cup while it is at their mouths, and of their wealth and honour while it is in their hands: but its little pleasure that they can fetch from *Heaven!* The thought of it may rather feed their terrors. What pleasure they can pick out of the dirt, let them make their best of: But *heavenly pleasures* are above their reach.

So much for the *Objects of a Holy life*, from whence a Believer may fetch his pleasure.

Object. But you tell us only of the Pleasant part; but the trou-
blesome and bitter part you say nothing of.

Answ. Come on, and say your worst of a Holy life, and tell us which is that bitter part.

Object. 1. The scripture requireth us to mortifie the flesh, to renounce the world, to forbear our Pleasures, to deny our selves, and to take up our Cross and follow Christ; and will you call this a pleasant life?

Ausw. And do you indeed think this so sad a busines? Here are three things contained in this objection, as the matter that seemeth so displeasing to you. 1. The parting with your sins. 2. The sufferings that are principally for sin. 3. The sufferings that are principally for the cause of Christ.

1. And do you think that sin is so lovely a thing that a man cannot live merrily without it? sin is the breach of the Laws of God, and the injury of the Heavenly Majetty, and the provocation of his hot displeasure, and the poison and sickness of the soul. And is it your spore to abuse the Lord? Is your pleasure gone, if you may not injure the God that made you? What natures, what sinful hearts have you, that must have such pleasures? Cannot a man live merrily unless he may provoke the God of Heaven, and trample upon mercy and despise salvation? Can you not live in pleasure, unless you may drink poison, or keep your sickness, or tumble in the dirt? One would think that mischief to our selves or others should be small pleasure to an honest mind. Its no pleasure to you to spit in the face of your dearest friends, or to abuse your parents, or to provoke your neighbours; and is it such pleasure as you cannot forsake, to abuse the Lord, and wrong your souls! The pleasures of sin do tend to pain: some pain doth usually attend it here, and much more hereafter: God would prevent your pain and misery, by preventing or destroying your sin: And do you accuse his word because it would keep you from so costly, so bitter, so dangerous delights? It is for your Pleasure, that this pleasure is forbidden you. The sweeteness of the poison of sin will be soon gone, when the gripings of the tormented Conscience do remain. You will forbear the most delightful fruits or drinks, if your Physicion tell you they will hazard your life, or torment you afterward. You are short-sighted, and short-witted, and look but to the present relish of things, and choose them if you rate them sweet; but God looks to your everlasting pleasures. So that you may well reckon it among the pleasures of a holy life, that you have such preservatives against the greatest sorrows: and that you are kept from the pleasures that will be bitterness in the latter end.

Yea at the present hath not drunkenness more trouble attending it then soberity! Reckon up the consuming of mens estates, the troubles of their families, the sicknesses of their bodies, the shame and

and contempe that it bringeth on them here, and the wounds of their consciences, and tell me whether it were not more pleasure to forbear those cups then to drink them. And hath not Gluttony more trouble attending it then temperance ! By that time the charge be paid, the sickness that fulness breedeth be endured, the physcion paid, and all the effects of gluttony overcome, you will find that the pleasure was little to the pain. The like I may say of Uncleanness, worldliness, passion, pride, and all other sins that usually bring a punishment with them.

2. And then for *Castigatory sufferings*, it is not Gedliness that is the cause of them (as sufferings.) Sin less, and suffer less. Provoke not God, and he will spare the rod. Do you *hurt* your selves like careles children, and then *blame* God for bidding you, [Take heed?] God doth not punish men for Holiness, and well doing. It is for want of Holiness that you are punished. I think therefore that it is part of the *Pleasure* of a *Holy* life, that it keeps men out of the *way of punishment*. You *must* have pain, and unpleasant physick, when once you have taken a surfe of sensual delight, and made your selves sick with too much of the creature. Holiness would have prevented this : And when that's too late, it would *care* it by the cheapest means that your health will bear. Is it not then unreasonable when you have troubled your selves, to blame your physcion for troubling you in order to a cure ?

3. And for those sufferings that are principally for Christ, consider, 1. That they are also originally from sin, and therefore you may know what to blame for the bitter part. Though the Time, and place, and manner and measure of your sufferings may proceed from the gracious providence of your Lord ; yet that supposest that sin had brought you into a state of suffering in general before, which Christ did not presently and plenarily remit and take off, but disposeth of them by his wisdom, as may make most for his Glory and your good. 2. And will you grudge at a little *transitory* pain, that is usually requited with *comforts* in this life, and rewarded with *pleasures unspeakable* hereafter ? You grudge not to cast away your seed in hope of an increase at harvest ; nor do you murmur at your daily labour if it be but blessed with success. And will you grudge to pass through sufferings to glory, and to sow in tears that you may reap in joy ? It is

but few that suffer Martyrdom, or any great matter for the cause of Christ, especially in our dayes : And those few have uſually more joy then sorrow. If you knew the *joyes of Martyrs*, you would never to shrink at the *sufferings of Martyrs*. And for a few mocks and scorns of foolish men, it is scarcely worth the name of a *suffering* : Nor is it so much as wicked men suffer in their sin. As *Godliness is a shame among the foolish wicked men*; so *wickedness is a shame among all that are pious, wise and sober*. And why should not the shame of sin be more loathed then the undeserved shame of honesty ? Alas, all this is nothing to the sorrows of the ungodly. A little of the vinegar of affliction will make us relish our prosperity the better, and through our frailtie is become a *necessary sauce to that luscious state that we are so apt to surfe on* ! Do you not see what lamentable work prosperity, victories, honour, and worldly wealth and power have made in the world ? and shall we grudge at that necessary moderate affliction that saveth us from the *like overthrows* ? O how few are able to withstand the temptations of great or long prosperity ! Experience of the frequent, woful falls of prospering men, that seemed once as firm as any, hath made me fear when I hear of the exaltation of my friends, and the less to grieve for their adversity or my own. Holiness therefore is the most pleasant way, notwithstanding the afflictions that do attend it : And if God will give me an *increase of Holiness*, (of Faith, and Love, and a Heavenly mind) though it be with an *increase of my Afflictions*, I hope I shall take it as an *increase of my pleasure*, and give him the praise of so merciful a dispensation. And thus I have proved to you from the Nature of *Holiness*, that it is the most *Pleasant way*.

II. I Should next shew you the *Delights of Holiness*, from the *Helps and Concomitants* that promote our pleasure. But because I am afraid of lengthening my discourse too much, I shall only name a few things of many.

1. God being *our God in Covenant*, his Love is to the holy soul, as the Sun is to our bodies, to illuminate, warm, revive, and comfort them ; and did not sin cause some eclipses, or raise some clouds, or shut the windows, we should *rejoyce continually*, and find

find how sweet a thing it is, being justified by faith, to have peace with God.

2. We are in *Covenant* with *Jesus Christ*, who intercedeth for our peace with God. And the Father always heareth his intercession, *John 11. 42*. And therefore that measure of comfort which he seeth suitable to our present state, we shall be sure of. Who shall condemn us? when it is *Christ* that dyed, year rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us, *Rom. 8. 34*. We have a great high-Priest that is passed into the heavens, even *Jesus the Son of God*; one that is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are, but without sin; and therefore through him we may come boldly to the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. *Heb. 4. 14, 15, 16*. What comforting words hath he spoken to us in the *Gospel*? and what comfortable relations hath he put us into? He calleth us *his friends*, if we do his *Commandments*, as if *servantes* were too low a title, *John 15. 14, 15*. *Peace* he leaveth with us: his *Peace* he giveth to us; not as the world giveth: commanding us that we let not our hearts be troubled or afraid, *Job. 14. 27*. To those that *Love him*, he hath promised his *Fathers Love*, and that they will come to him, and make their abode with him. *John 14. 23*. If any man serve him, let him follow him; and where *Christ* is, there shall his servant be; if any man serve *Christ*, him will the *Father honour*, *John 12. 26*.

3. That we might have sure Consolation, the *Spirit of Christ* is given to be *our Comforter*: and we are in *Covenant* with him also, who surely will perform his *Covenants*.

4. The servants of *Christ* have his *holy image*, the *mark* of his children, which is the in-dwelling Evidence of his Love, to assure them of their happiness.

5. They have manifold *experience* of the kindness of their Father, in hearing their prayers, and helping them in their straits, and delivering them in their distresses.

6. They have also the help of the *Experience of others*, even of all the godly with whom they do converse, who can comfort them with their comforts, and tell them how good they have found the *Lord*.

7. They have the *Ministers of Christ* appointed by office to be the *helpers of their Faith and Joy*: to be the *messengers of glad tidings*.

tidings to them, and to tell them from God of the pardon of their sins, and of his favour to them in Christ: and to heal the broken-hearted, and preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, &c. Luke 4. 18. To have a deputed Officer of Christ to *absolve the penitent, and deliver them pardon in the name of Christ,* and to pray for them, and direct them, and resolve their doubts, and shew them the promises that may support them, and help to profligate their temptations, must needs be much to the *comfort* of believers: As the care of a father is the *comfort* of the child; and the care of the Physician is a *comfort* to the sick.

8. They have all the *Ordinances* suited to their *comfort*: the Word read, preached and meditated on: the Sacraments and the publike praises of God, and Communion of the Saints (of which before.)

9. They have *multitudes* of *Mercies* still about them, and every day renewed on them, to feed their *comforts*.

10. They have a promise that *all things shall work together for their good*; and so that all their *afflictions themselves* shall be their *commodities*, and *death itself shall be their gain*, Rom. 8. 28. Phil. 1. 21. and all their *enemies* shall be subdued by Christ the Prince of their salvation.

So that from this much you may see, that for *Joy* and *Pleasure*, there is no life that hath the advantages that a *holy life* hath. *As for the ungodly, they are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away*, Psalm 1. 4. These *pleasures* grow not in their *wicked way*, nor do such *strangers* know *Believers* *joyes*.

III. **L**astly, I should also have shewed you the *Pleasure* of **H**oliness by the *Effects*: But here also to avoid prolixity, I will but name a few.

1. *Holiness is Pleasing to God himself*; and therefore it must needs be *pleasant* to the *Saints* that have it: For it is their end and chiefest *Pleasure to please God*. They know that this is the end for which they were *Created, Redeemed, and renewed*; and therefore that is the most *Pleasant life* to them, in which they find that *God is best Pleased*. And therefore they labour, that whether *present* or *absent*, they may be *accepted of him*, 2 Cor. 5. 9. They

are an holy Priest-hood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5.

2. Holiness must needs be Pleasant to the soul, because it is the spiritual health of the soul, and the means and certain evidence of its safety. And Health is a constant sensible delight: And to know that our souls have ~~scapt~~ the danger of the wrath of God, and everlasting misery, must needs be a greater Pleasure then any the matters of this world can afford. One serious thought of the salvation, which Holiness is the earnest of, may give that true contentment to the soul, that all the wealth and glory of the world can never give.

3. Holiness removeth fears and troubles, and therefore must needs be a Pleasant state. It removeth the fears of the wrath of God, and of damnation: and the fears of all destructive evils: It tends to heal the wounded soul, and pacifie the clamorous conscience, and abate all worldly and groundless sorrows; for which the wicked have no true cure.

4. Holiness is the destruction of sin: and sin is the cause of all calamities: and therefore Holiness must needs be Pleasant.

5. Holiness doth consist in rejoicing Graces, that are exceeding pleasant in the exercise; as Faith, Hope, Love, Patience, &c. yea it consisteth in Joy it self, Rom. 14. 17.

6. It fits the soul for Communion with God, who is the fountain of Delights; and it brings us near him, and acquaints us with him as a God of Love: and therefore must needs be a Pleasant state.

7. You see by experience, that when once men have tryed a Holy life, they think they can never have enough of it: The more Holy they are, the more Holy they would be. He that hath ~~most~~, would fain have ~~more~~: And the weakest desireth no less then to be perfect. And do you think men that have tryed it, would so long after ~~more~~ and ~~more~~, if it were not pleasant?

Judge also by the Labour and diligence of the godly, who seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and make it the principal busines of their lives: Would they make all this ado for nothing? Or for that which is a matter of no delight?

Judge also by the delights which they voluntarily forsake, when they let go all their sinful pleasures, and renounce all the glory of

the world ; would they make this exchange , if they had not found a more pleasant course , and that which tends to everlasting pleasure ?

8. You see also that the truly Godly , when once they have tryed a holy life , will never go back again to their former pleasures , but loath the very remembrance of them : It is not all the honours , and riches , and pleasures in the world , that can hire them to forsake a holy life . Sure therefore they find it the most pleasant course ; if not in sensible delights , yet at least in easing their consciences , and securing their minds from the terrors that sinful pleasures would produce . If they found that Godliness answered not their expectation , they have leisure enough , and temptations too many , to turn back into the state from whence they came . But how would they abhor such a motion as this ?

9. If Holines were not a Pleasant thing , it could not help us to bear up under all afflictions , nor make us rejoice in tribulation , as it doth . That which can sweeten gall and wormwood , must needs be very sweet it self . That which can make reproach , and scorn , and poverty , and imprisonment , either sweet or tolerable , is sure it self a pleasant thing .

10. Lastly , if Holines were not pleasant , it could not make Death it self so easie , nor take off its terrors , nor cause the Martyrs to suffer so joyfully for Christ : Death is the King of terrors , and so bitter a cup , that it must needs be a pleasant thing indeed , that can sweeten it .

Besides all this that hath been said , let me briefly have some general aggravations , of the Delights of Holines . And compare it as we go with the Delights of the ungodly .

1. The Delights of Holines are the most Great , and Glorious , and Sublime delights . They are fetcht from the most Great and Glorious things . It is God , and his Grace , and everlasting glory that feed our pleasures . Whereas the Delights of sensual men , are fed with trifles : What do they rejoice in but the foisteries of sin , and the filthyness of their own transgressions ! What is it that contenteth them , but a dream of honour , or the good will and word of mortal men , or a brutish sportfalsesse , or the pleasing of the itch of lust , or the provision that they have laid up for the flesh ?

The treasures of a Kingdom excell not the treasure of a childs pin-box the thousandth part so much as Heaven excells the treasure of the ungodly. Judge therefore by the *matter* that feeds their pleasure, which of the two is the more pleasant life: to sport in their own shame, and laugh at the brink of misery, with the ungodly; or to delight our selves in the Love of God, and rejoice in the assured hope of Glory with the true believer?

2. The Delights of *Holiness* are the *most rational, well-grounded, sure delights*. They are not delusory, nor grounded on mistakes or fancies. They are warranted by the *truth* and *All-sufficiency* of God, and the *certainty* of his *promise*, and the *immutability* of his counsels, and the *sure Reward* prepared for his *Saints*. None but a lying malicious Devil, or his instruments that participate of his nature, or a blind, corrupted, partial flesh, will ever go about to question the foundations of our faith and comforts. The hopes and comforts that are built upon this Rock, will never fall, nor make us ashamed.

But the ungodly rejoice in their own delusions: It is ignorance and error that they are beholden to for their mirth. They laugh in their sleep, or as mad men in their distraction. Did they know that Satan rejoiceth in their joyes; and that an offended God is always present, and how poor a matter it is that they rejoice in, it would mar their mirth. If they saw the Hell that they are near, or well-considered where they stand, and what a case their souls are in, they would have little list to play or laugh. If they knew aright the shortness of their pleasures, and the length of their sorrows, and in what a doleful case their wealth and fleshly delights will leave them, it would turn their laughter into mourning and lamentation. So that they rejoice but (as a sick man in a phrensic, or as a fool upon some good news to him that is false;) upon *meer mistake*.

3. The Delights of *Holiness* are the *most pure Delights*, and *most entire and compleat*. There is no *Evil* in it, mixed with the *Good*, and therfore nothing to interrupt the joy. Our joyes indeed are too much interrupted: but that is not from any hurt that is in a *holy life*; but by the *contrary sin*, which *Holiness* must work out. If men take *poison*, let them not blame nature that strives against it, if they are sick; but let them blame themselves, and the *poison*, that puts nature to expell it. In *Holiness*

itself there is nothing but Good, and therefore nothing that should grieve us.

But it is far otherwise with sensual delights: As they are *sinful*, they are *wholly evil*: As they are *natural*, feeding upon the creature alone, they are as it is, a mixture of *Vanity* and *Vexation*. Every creature hath its unsuitableness and imperfection, by which it *disturbeth* even where it *pleaseth*, and *troubleth* where it *comforteth*, and *frustrateth* and *disappointeth* more then it *satisfieth*. The more we *Love* it, usually the more we *suffer* by it. That thing which we most *excessively love*, is ordinarily our *sharpest scourge*. That friend whom we most *excessively love*, is usually our greatest *sorrow*: either by *their failing* our *expectations*, or by *our failing* *theirs*, or *our insufficiency* to *accomplice* the good which we *desire* of them. If they prove *unkind*, it is more *grievous* then the *unkindness* of many others: If they prove *faithful*, how deeply do we *suffer* with them in all their *sufferings*? *Their wants* do *pinch* us as *our own*: *Their reproaches* are *our shame*: *Their losses* take as much from *us*: *Their sickness* paineth *us*: *Their death* half killeth *us*: And he that is so *happy* as to have many such friends, is so *unhappy* as to have more burdens, fears and griefs to *suffer*, and more deaths to die then other men. But especially to *ungodly men*, these earthly comforts are uncomfortable, because *they* have none of the Divine delights that are the *kernel* and the *spirit*, but take up with the *shell* or *husk*: And because their mirth is mixt with their *own misery*, which conscience sometime gripes them for, with such deep remorse as cools their comforts: And some *thoughts* of the *shortness* of their *pleasures* will be stepping in, and ending them before their time: So that the *bitterness* of *worldly things* surpasseth the *delights*.

4. The *Delights* of *Holiness* are *Deep* and *Solid*, and therefore do *stablish* and *corroborate* the *Hearts*. But *sensual delights* are like *childrens laughter*: they are *slight*, and *out side*, and *flitting* and *vain*: As children laugh in one breath, and cry in the next; so *worldly joys* are followed at the heels by *sorrows*; For they lie not *deep*, and fortifie not the *heart* against *distresses*, as the *delights* of *faith* and *holiness* do.

5. The *Pleasures* of the *Saints* are the *gift* of *God*, and *allow*ed of by *him*; commanded by *his word*, and *promoted* by *his promises* and *mercies*, and are but the *fruits* of *his Everlasting Love*:

Love: And being so Divine, they must needs be excellent.

But the *Pleasures* of ungodly worldly men are partly forbidden and condemned by God, and partly contradicted and confounded, by his terrible *threatnings*, and the discovery of his wrath. *There is no Peace saith the Lord, to the wicked*, Isa. 48.22. & 57.21. God doth disown and protest against their peace. If they will keep it, and make it good, it must be against his will. He forbiddeth joy to a rebellious people, Hos. 9.1. *Rejoyce not O Israel for joy as other people: for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God.* He calleth them to weeping and mourning, and rending of the heart, Joel. 2. 12, 13. Hear what God saith to them in their greatest pleasures, Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howle for your miseries that shall come upon you: Your riches are corrupted and your garments moth-eaten: Your gold and silver is sankred, and the rast of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: yee have heaped treasure together for the last days: — — — You have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton: You have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. — — —] A man would think it should either Turn them, or Torment them, and fill their hearts with continual horrour, to find God thus solemnly protesting against their peace, and sentencing them to woe and sorrows.*

6. The *Pleasures* of the *Godly* are clean and noble, and honest and honourable. They delight in things of greatest worth, for which they had their *Natures*, their *Time* and all. But the *Pleasures* of *sinners* are base and filthy: They Delight as swine in wallowing in the mire: and as the dog to eat his own Vomit, 2. Pet. 2.22. They delight to wrong the God that made them, and by whom they live, and to cross the ends of their lives and mercies; and to drive away all true delights, and to undo themselves. This is the matter of their delight.

7. The *Devil* is a great enemy to the *Delights* of Holiness; which is a sign that they are excellent. He doth what he can to keep men from the *Holy State*, lest they should meet with the *Happiness* that attends it. And if he prevail not in this his chief design, he doth what he can to fill up the lives of believers with calamities. All the enemies that he can raise up against them, shall by temptations, scorns or injuries, assault their comforts; All the storms that he can raise shall be sure to fall upon them.

How busie is he to fill them with fears and *doubtings*? and to cast perplexing thoughts into their minds? or to *mislead* them into some perplexing *ways*? and fasten on them *entangling doctrines*, or *disquieting principles*? How cunningly and diligently will he argue against their peace and *comforts*? and seek to hide the Love of God, and dishonour the blood and grace and covenant of Christ? and cross the comforting workings of the spirit? How subtilly will he question all our *Evidences*? and extenuate all Gods comforting mercies? and do all that he can, that the godly may have a *Hell on Earth*, though they shall have none hereafter. It is sure an excellent Joy and Pleasure, which Satan is so great an enemy to.

8. The *Delights of Holiness do make us better*; They are so far from disordering the mind, and leading us to sin, that they compose and purifie the mind, and make sin much more odious to us, then before. No man hates sin so much as he that hath seen the pleased face of God, and tasted most the sweetnes of his grace, and tryed the pleasant paths of life. And therefore it is, that when a believer comes from fervent prayers, or from heavenly conference or meditation, or from hearing the blessed word of life, laid open plainly, and applyed powerfully to his soul, he would then abhor a temptation to sensual delights, if they were set before him. Till we lose the *relish of Holy things*, and suffer our *Delight in God to fade*, we are seldom taken in the snares of any *fleshy vanities*. *Money is dire to us*, and *honour a smock*, and *lust doth stink*, as long as we maintain our *delight in God*. He is the *best and highest Christian*, that hath most of these *spiritual delights*.

But *fleshy Pleasures make men worse*; They intoxicate the mind, and fill it with vanity and folly; They are the snares to entrap us, and the harlots that do bewitch us, and defile the soul that should be chaste for God; The noise of this sensual foolish mirth, doth drown the voice of God and Reason, so that in the needfullest matters they cannot be heard. In their hunting and hawking, dicing and carding, drinking and revelling, feasting and dancing how little of God or heaven is on the sinners mind? seldom is the soul so unfit for duty, so incapable of instruction, so hardened against the word and warnings of the Lord, as in the depth of sensual delights. Then it is that they are [foolish, disobedient, and deceived,] when they are [serving

[*serving divers lusts and pleasures*] as *Paul* that had tryed both ways, confesseth, *Tit. 3. 3.* None so unlike to be the servants of Christ, as they that are cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and that fare sumptuously or deliciously every day, *Luk. 16.* To live in rioting and drunkeenes, in chambering and Wantonnes, in strife and envying, and to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof] is the description of one that walks not honestly, and is far from a Christians life and hopes, *Rom. 13. 13, 14.* It is those voluptuous sensual sinners, that most obstinately shut out all reproofs, and refuse him that speaketh to them from heaven, and will not so much as soberly consider of the things that concern their everlasting peace; and therefore are oft so forsaken of grace, that they grow to be *scorners* of the means of their salvation, and [*being past feeling do give themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness*] *Eph. 4. 19.* Which then is most desirable? the *healing* or the *wounding* pleasures? the *quicken*ing or the *killing* mirth? the *wholsome* or the *poysous* sweet? the delights that mend us and further our salvation, or corrupting pleasures that drown men in perdition?

9. The *Delights of Holiness* are *kin to Heaven*: They are of the same nature with those that *Saints* and *Angels* have with God (though we must acknowledge an unconceivable difference). It is the *same God*, and the *same Glory* that now delighteth us as seen by *faith*, which shall then delight us, when seen by *intuition* with open face. We are solacing our selves in *Love* and *Praise*, with the *same employment* that we must have in *Heaven*. And therefore if *Heaven* be the state of *Greatest joy and pleasure*, the state of *Grace*, and work of *Holiness*, that is *likest* to it, must needs be *next it*.

But *sensual pleasures* are *beastial* and *fordid*, and so *far* unlike the *Joys of Heaven*, that nothing more withdraws the mind, or maketh it *unmeet for Heaven*.

10. Lastly, the *delights of Holiness* are *durable*, even *everlasting*. The further we goe, the greater cause we have of joy. It is not a *mutable* good that we rejoice in, but in the *immutable* God, the *ancient* of *days*, and in that Christ that loveth his spouse with an *everlasting* love; and in the *sure* and *faithful* promises; and in the *hopes* of the *Kingdom* that cannot be moved. The *spring* of our *pleasures* is in *Heaven*: and our *rejoycing* is but *the*

the beginning of that which must there be perpetuated. Death cannot kill the joys of a believer : the grave shall not bury them : millions of ages shall not end them! Here they may be interrupted, because the pleased face of God may be eclipsed, and sin and Satan may cast malicious doubt into our minds ; and the neighbourhood of the flesh will force the mind to participate of its sufferings. But still God will keep their comforts alive, at least in the root ; and help them in the act, as we have need of them and are fit for them : And in the world of Joy for which he is preparing us, our Joy shall be perfected, and never have interruption or end. Holy-Festivals, and Ordinances, and sweetest Communion of Saints, and dearest Love of truest friends, and perfect health and prosperity in the world, and all other comforts set together, that this world affords, are but short emblems and small fore-tastes of the Joyes which the face of God will afford us, and we shall have with Christ, his Saints and Angels, to all eternity.

But *sensual Pleasures* are of so short continuance, that they are gone before we feel well that we have them. The drunkard, the glutton, the fornicator, the gamester are drinking but a sugered cup of poyon : and merrily sowing the seeds of everlasting sorrow : Satan is but scratching them (as the butcher shaves the throat of the swine) before he kill them: One quarter of an hour ends the pleasure and leaves a damp of sadness in its room: He that hath had 40. or 50. years pleasures, hath no relish of it when it is past ; but it is as if it had never been : and much worse. He that hath spent a day, or moneth, or year in Pleasure, hath no more at night, or at the years end, when it is gone, than he that spent that time in sorrow. The bones and dust of thousands lie now in the Church-yard, that have tasted many a sweet cup and morsel, and have had many a merry wanton day : And are they now any better for it, then if they had never known it ? And are not the poor and sorrowful there their equals ? And doubtless their souls have as little of those pleasures as their dust. In Heaven they are abhorred : In Hell they are turned into tormenting flames, and remembred as fuel for the devouring fire. There are *Gluttons*, but no more *good cheer* : There are *Drunkards*, but no more *drink* : There are *Fornicators*, but no more *lustful pleasures* : There are the playful wasters of their time, but no more *sport and recreation* : There are the vain-glorious,

ous, proud, ambitious souls, but not in glory, honour and renown; but their aspiring hath cast them into the gulf of misery, and their pride hath covered them with utter confusion, and their glory is turned to their endless shame. Those that are now overwhelmed with the wrath of God, and shut up under desperation, are the souls that lately wallowed here in the delights of the flesh, and enjoyed for a season the pleasures of sin; and now what fruit have they of all their former seeming happiness? He that is feasted and gallantly adorned and attended to day, is crying for a drop of water in vain to morrow, Luk. 16. 23, 24, 25, 26. Christ tells you the gain of earthly riches, and the duration of earthly pleasures, to the ungodly, Luk. 6. 24, 25. [Woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation: Woe to you that are full, for you shall hunger: woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.] that is, You that live a sensual life, and take up your pleasure and felicity here, shall find that all will end in sorrow. But [blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled: blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh, v. 21.] that is, You that are contented to pass through sorrows and tribulation on earth, to the Kingdom where you have placed your happiness and hopes, shall find that your sorrows will end in joy; and therefore you are blessed while you seem miserable to the world, Joh. 16. 20. [Ye shall weep and lament; but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.] v. 22. [Now you have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.] We have a constant interest in the Fountain of all Joy; and if our sun be clouded, it is but for a moment. [Our maker is our Husband: the Lord of hosts is his name: and our Redeemer the holy one of Israel; the God of the whole earth: — For a small moment may he forsake us, but with great mercy will he gather us in. In a little wrath he may hide his face from us for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on us, saith the Lord our Redeemer. As he sware that the waters of Noah should no more goe over the earth, so hath he sworn that he will not be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed; but his kindness shall not depart from us, nor the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on us] Isa. 54. 5, to 19. [For his anger

anger endureth but for a moment : in his favour is life : weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.] Psal. 30.5. Storms may arise that may affright us : but how quickly will they all be over ? [Come my people (saith the Lord, Isa. 26. 20.) enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee : hide thy self as it were for a little moment, untill the indignation be overpast.]

And as the momentany sorrow of the Godly is forgotten in everlasting Joy, so the Joy of the wicked is but for a moment, and is drowned in everlasting sorrows. Job 20. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. [Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the Joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment ? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds ; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung : They which have seen him shall say, Where is he ? He shall flee away as a dream, and shall not be found : He shall be chased away as a vision of the night : the eye also which saw him, shall see him no more ; neither shall his place any more behold him.] Job 21. 12, 13. [They take the Timbrell and Harp, and rejoice at the sound of the Organs : they spend their daies in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.]

It would grieve a considerate believer to look on a worldly sensual gallant, in the midst of his vain-glory, or any unsanctified man in his mirth and pleasure, and to think where that man will shortly be, and how the case will be altered with him, and where his sport and mirth will leave him. As it would sadden our hearts to see one of them struck dead in the place, or to see the Devil fetch them away, and spoil the game ; so should it grieve us to fore-see the stroak of death, and the condemnation of their souls to everlasting misery. And can that man much value the pleasure of ungodly men, that doth fore-see this end ? Would you not laugh at him that were a Prince but for a day, and must be the scorn of the world to morrow ? or that would choose one day of mirth and pleasure, though he knew it would fill the rest of his life with pain and misery ? If folly and stupidity were any wonder, it were a wonder that ungodly men can be merry, when their consciences tell them that they are not sure to stay one hour out of Hell ; nor to hold on their mirth till the end of the game : But while they are saying, [Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink and be merry ;] they may suddenly be told from God, [Thou fool, this night

night shall thy soul be required of thee] and then whose is thy wealth? and then where is thy sport and mirth? *Luke 12.19,20.* As the tender flowers and Roses of the Spring, do fall before the nipping Frosts, and will not live in Winter storms; no more will your fading mirth endure the frowns of God, the face of death, nor scarce a serious fore-thought of the day that you are near. And such matter of horrour is continually before you, while you are under the wrath and curse of God, in a carnal unregenerate state, that you are beholden to folly, security and stupidity for that ease which hindreth your everlasting ease.

So that all things considered, I must seriously profess, that (however the ungodly have some pleasant dreams, and may live a while in carelessness and stupidity, or sleepe in the face, while the beginning of hell is in their consciences, yet) I must judge, that a life of Faith and Holines are unspeakably sweet, if it were but for this, that they save the *Conscience* from the gripes, and fears, and terrible thoughts, that either sometime feed on the ungodly, or are ready to devour their mirth and them. So sad and frightful a thing it is, to be unsanctified, and in a state of sin, that it is an high commendation of the delights of *Holiness*, that they so much deliver us from those grievous terrors, and are so powerful an Antidote to preserve the heart from the wicked's pangs and desperation. Believe it, when *conscience*, *death*, and *judgement*, are the messengers to declare your endless sorrows, you will then wish, and ten thousand times wish, that you had some of the Faith and Holiness of the Saints, to be a Cordial to your sinking hearts; and then you would take it as a matter of unspeakable joy, to be found in such a state as you now count sad and melancholy. Ask but a dying man, whether *fleshy pleasure* or *Godliness* be the *sweeter thing*? Now when the delusions of prosperity are gone, which do men most relish? and which is it that they would own? By the consent of all the wise men in the world, I may well conclude, that a *Holy life* is incomparably the *most pleasant*.

BUT I know there are many things that seem to cross all this that I have spoken, which will be the matter of the Objections of ungodly men, and therefore must have an answer, before we pass any further. And the principal *objection* is from the too

common ease of those that fear God, who walk so sadly, and doubt, and complain, and mourn so frequently, and shew so little chearfulness and joy, when many of the ungodly live in mirth, that you will think I speak against experience, when I say that a life of Holiness is so pleasant, and therefore that it is not to be believed. You will say, [Do we not see the contrary in the sadness of their faces, and hear it in their sad lamenting words?]

To this I must give many particulars in answer, which when you have laid together, you may see, that all this makes nothing against the Pleasantry of the waies of God.

And, 1. You must difference between the *Entrance* into holiness, and the *Progress*: and between a new beginner, that is but lately turned from his ungodliness, and one that hath had time to try and understand the wayes of God. Those that are *entering*, or but *newly come in*, must needs have sorrow. But what is the cause of it? Not their *Godliness*, but their *ungodliness*. I mean, It is their *ungodliness*, which they lament, though it be *godliness* that causeth them to lament it: Can you expect that an ingenuous man should see his sin, and look back on so many years transgressions, and not be grieved? To see that he hath so long abused God, and lost his time, and neglected his salvation, and that he hath lain so long in so miserable a state, must needs cause remorse in the conscience that hath *any* feeling. And will you say that *Godliness* is *unpleasant*, because it makes a man sorrow for his *ungodliness*? If a man that hath killed his dearest friend, or his own Father, be grieved for the *fall* when he cometh to repentance, will you blame his *Repentance* or his *Murder* for his grief? Will you say, [What a hurtful thing is this *Repentance*?] or rather [What an odious crime was it that must be so repented of?] Would you wish a man that hath lived so long in sin and misery, to have no sorrow for it at his return? Especially when it is but a *healing sorrow*, preparing for remission, and not a sorrow joyned with despair, as there will be that die impenitently? Observe the complaints of penitent souls, whether it be their *present Godliness*, or their *former ungodliness*, which they lament: Will you hear a man lament his *former sinful careles life*, and yet will you lay the blame on the contrary course of duty, which now he hath undertaken? You may as wisely accuse a man for landing in a *safe harbour*, because he there *leaveth his safe by shipwreck*, while

while he was at Sea. Or as wisely may you blame a man for rising, that complaineth how he hurt himself by his fall. And as honestly may you accuse the *chastity* of your wife, because she lamenteth her former *adultery*; or the *fidelity* of your friend or servant, because he lamenteth his former *unfaithfulness*.

But though the pangs of the *New birth* be somewhat grievous, and we come not into the world of *Grace* without some lamentation, yet this is not the *state* of the *Holy life*, into which we enter; nor are those pangs to continue all our daies.

2. You must distinguish between the *weaker* and the *stronger* sort of Christians: and consider, that *children* are apt to *cry*; but it is not therefore *better* to be *unborn*: *Sickness* is *querulous*, and the *weak* are *froward*; but it is not therefore *better* to be *dead*. The *godly* are not *perfectly godly*: They are *sinners* while they are *Saints*: They have *Holiness*; but they have *corruption* with it: Their *sin* is *conquered*, but yet not *totally rooted out*. The *relics* do *remain*, though it do not *reign*. And it is the *remnant* of their *unholiness* that they lament, and not their *holiness*: They grieve not that they are *godly*, but that they are *no more godly*. It troubleth them not that they are come home to Christ, but that they have brought so much of their *corruption* with them. Hearken whether they complain of their *Humility* or their *Pride*? of their *Faith*, or their *unbelief*? their *confidence* or their *distrust*? their *repentance* or their *hardness* of *heart*? It is not their *heavenly mindedness* that troubleth them, but their *earthly mindedness*. Nor is it their *spiritualitie*, but their *carnalitie*: Nor is it the *Danies*, but the *weakness* and *faultiness* of their *fools* in *duty*: Not that they *do*: but that they *do it no better*. It is *more holiness* that they beg for, and lament the want of. And will you say that *Holiness* is *unpleasant*, because men would so *soon* have *more* of it? You would reason with more *wisdom* in another case. If a man that hath *taffed meat* or *drink*, complain because he hath no *more*, you would not blame his *foolishness* for that; nor gather from thence, that it is *unpleasant*, or that *famine* is *more delightful*.

3. You must distinguish between those Christians that have *fallen* since their *conversion*, into any great and wounding sin, or *never* have *transgressions* *dissupposed*, and those that walk more *affrightly* with *God*, and maintain their *integrity* and *peace*. No wonder if *David* after his *sin*, complain of the *breaking* of his *bones* and *bones*: and if *Peter* go out and weep *miserably*. The

anger endureth but for a moment : in his favour is life : weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.] Psa. 30.5. Storms may arise that may affright us : but how quickly will they all be over ? [Come my people (saith the Lord, Isa. 26. 20.) enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee : hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over past.]

And as the momentary sorrow of the Godly is forgotten in everlasting Joy, so the Joy of the wicked is but for a moment, and is drowned in everlasting sorrow. Job 20. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. [Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the Joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment ? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds ; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung : They which have seen him shall say, Where is he ? He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found : Tears shall be chased away as a vision of the night : the eye also which saw him, shall see him no more, neither shall his place any more behold him.] Job 21. 12, 13. [They take the Timbrell and Harp, and rejoice at the sound of the Organs : they spend their daies in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.]

It would grieve a considerate believer to look on a worldly sensual gallant, in the midst of his vain-glory, or any unsanctified man in his mirth and pleasure, and to think where that man will shortly be, and how the case will be altered with him, and where his sport and mirth will leave him. As it would sadden our hearts to see one of them struck dead in the place, or to see the Devil fetch them away, and spoil the game ; so should it grieve us to fore-see the stroak of death, and the condemnation of their souls to everlasting misery. And can that man much value the pleasure of ungodly men, that doth *fore-see this end* ? Would you not laugh at him that were a Prince but for a day, and must be the scorn of the world to morrow ? or that would choose one day of mirth and pleasure, though he knew it would fill the rest of his life with pain and misery ? If folly and stupidity were any wonder, it were a wonder that ungodly men can be merry, when their consciences tell them that they are not sure to stay one hour out of Hell ; nor to hold on their mirth till the end of the game : But while they are saying, [Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink and be merry ;] they may suddenly be told from God, [Then foot, this night

ight shall thy soul be required of thee] and then whose is thy wealth? and then where is thy sport and mirth? *Lady 12.19,20.* As the tender flowers and Roles of the Spring, do fall before the nipping frosts, and will not live in Winter storms; no more will your fading mirth endure the frowns of God, the face of death, nor scarce a serious fore-thought of the day that you are near. And such matter of horrour is continually before you, while you are under the wrath and curse of God, in a carnal unregenerate state, that you are behoden to folly, security and stupidity for that ease which hindreth your everlasting ease.

So that all things considered, I must seriously profess, that however the ungodly have some pleasant dreams, and may live a while in carelessness and stupidity, or sleep in the face, while the beginning of hell is in their consciences, yet I must judge, that a life of Faith and Holiness are unspeakably sweet; if it were but for this, that they save the Conscience from the gripe, and fears, and terrible thoughts, that either sometime feed on the ungodly, or are ready to devour their mirth and them. So sad and frightful a thing it is, to be unsanctified, and in a state of sin, that it is an high commendation of the delights of Holiness, that they so much deliver us from those grievous terrors, and are so powerful an Antidote to preserve the heart from the wicked's pangs and desperation. Believe it, when conscience, death, and judgement, are the messengers to declare your endless sorrows, you will then wish, and ten thousand times wish, that you had some of the Faith and Holiness of the Saints, to be a Cordial to your sinking hearts; and then you would take it as a matter of unspeakable joy, to be found in such a state as you now count sad and melancholy. Ask but a dying man, whether fleshly pleasure or Godliness be the sweetest thing? Now when the delusions of prosperity are gone, which do men most relish? and which is it that they would own? By the consent of all the wise men in the world, I may well conclude, that a *Holy life* is incomparably the most pleasant.

BUT I know there are many things that seem to cross all this that I have spoken, which will be the matter of the Objections of ungodly men, and therefore must have an answer, before we pass any further. And the principal Objection is from the too

common ease of those that fear God, who walk so sadly, and doubt, and complain, and mourn so frequently, and shew so little cheerfulness and joy, when many of the ungodly live in mirth, that you will think I speak against *experience*, when I say that a life of *Holiness* is so pleasant, and therefore that it is not to be believed. You will say, [Do we not see the contrary in the sadness of their faces, and hear it in their sad lamenting words?]

To this I must give many particulars in answer, which when you have laid together, you may see, that all this makes nothing against the *Pleasantness* of the waies of God.

And, 1. You must difference between the *Entrance* into holiness, and the *Progress*: and between a new beginner, that is but lately turned from his ungodliness, and one that hath had time to try and understand the wayes of God. Those that are *entering*, or but *newly come in*, must needs have sorrow. But what is the cause of it? Not their *Godliness*, but their *ungodliness*. I mean, It is their *ungodliness* which they lament, though it be *godliness* that causeth them to lament it: Can you expect that an ingenuous man should see his sin, and look back on so many years transgressions, and not be grieved? To see that he hath so long abused God, and lost his time, and neglected his salvation, and that he hath lain so long in so miserable a state, must needs cause remorse in the conscience that hath *any feeling*. And will you say that *Godliness* is *unpleasant*, because it makes a man sorrow for his *ungodliness*? If a man that hath killed his dearest friend, or his own Father, be grieved for the *fact* when he cometh to repentance, will you blame his *Repentance* or his *Murder* for his *grief*? Will you say, [What a *hurtful thing* is this *Repentance*?] or rather [What an *odious crime* was it that must be so repented of?] Would you wish a man that hath lived so long in sin and misery, to have *no sorrow* for it at his return? Especially when it is but a *healing sorrow*, preparing for remission, and not a sorrow joyned with despair, as theirs will be that die impenitently? Observe the complaints of penitent souls, whether it be their *present Godliness*, or their *former ungodliness*, which they lament? Will you hear a man lament his *former sinful careless life*, and yet will you lay the blame on the contrary course of duty, which now he hath undertaken? You may as wisely accuse a man for landing in a *safe harbour*, because he there lamenteth his *loss by shipwrack*, while

while he was at Sea. Or as wisely may you blame a man for rising, that complaineth how he hurt himself by his fall. And as honestly may you accuse the *chastity* of your wife, because she lamenteth her former *adultery*; or the *fidelity* of your friend or servant, because he lamenteth his former *unfaithfulness*.

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3. You must distinguish between those Christians that have *fallen* since their *conversion*, into any great and wounding sin, or *nuurish* some *vexations distempers*; and those that *walk more uprightly with God*, and maintain their *integrity* and *peace*. No wonder if *David* after his *sin*, complain of the *breaking of his bones* and *tears*: and if *Peter* go out and weep bitterly. The

servants of Christ do know so much of the evil of sin, that they cannot make so light of it, as the blind and obdurate world that are past feeling. That sin which hath cost them formerly so dear, and hath cost Christ so much dearer on their behalf, must needs cause *some smart* in the penitent soul. *Sickness* is felt, because it supposeth the subject to be *alive*: but the dead feel not that they are *dead and rotten*: And it doth not follow that therefore *death* is more desireable then *sickness*. It is because they are so *like* to the *ungodly*, that the servants of Christ do grieve and complain. But so far as they feel the healthfulness of their souls, and are conscious of their sincerity and upright conversations, they have greater comfort then the world can afford them.

4. You must distinguish between those Christians that by *misperceptions* are *unacquainted with their own felicity*, and those that better *understand their state*. If a man be never so holy, and *know it not*, but by *temptations* is brought to doubt, whether he be not yet in his *unsanctified state*, no wonder if this man be grieved with these fears. But his grief is not because he is *sainted*, but because he is afraid lest he be *unsainted*. And this shews that *Holiness* is most lovely in his eyes: or else why should he be so much troubled, when he doth but doubt whether he be *Holy* or not? If a Rich man by a false report should believe that he is rob'd of his goods and treasure, or that his houses are burnt, when it is not so, he will mourn or be troubled till he know the truth. And will any be so foolish as to conclude from thence, that *Riches* are more uncomfortable then *beggary*? Had you not rather be rich, though for a time you know it not, then to live in certain continual want? If a man that is in *health*, be perswaded by mistake that he is in a *Consumption*, he will be troubled by his mistake: But will you thence conclude that *sickness* is more comfortable then *health*? Is it not better to have *health* with those *mistaken fears*, then to live in *sickness*? Methinks you should rather argue on the contrary side, [*How sweet is Health, when the fear of losing it is so troublesome? and how bitter is sickness and death, when the very fear of them is so grievous?*] And so you should say, [*How sweet is Holiness, when it is so troublesome to those that have it, so much as to fear lest they have it not? and How miserable a life is it to be ungodly, when it is so grievous to the servants of Christ, even once to fear lest they are ungodly?*]

But go to those Christians that *know themselves*, and are truly acquainted with their *frincerity* and their *priviledges*, and see whether they walk so uncomfortably as those *miskaten* *doubting* souls; You will find them in another case, and hear other kind of language from their mouths; even the joyful praises of their Redeemer, and the thankful acknowledgements of his abundant love. How sweet unto their souls is the remembrance of kindness? and how delightful a work is it from day to day to magnifie his name?

5. You must also distinguish between those weak mistaken Christians, that *understand not the extent of the Covenant of grace*, and those that *do understand it*. If a believer by mistake should think that the grace of the Gospel extendeth not to *such as he*, because he is *unWorthy*, and his sins are great, no wonder if he be troubled: As you would be if you should conceive that your lease were not made to *you*, but to *another*: or as a malefactor would be if he thought his pardon belonged not to *him*, but to *another man*. But hence you should rather observe the riches and excellencies of the Gospel, and the happiness of the heirs of promise, then dream that its better be strangers to the holy Covenant still. They are better that *have a promise* of life and *understand it not*, then they that *have none*. But those that know the freeness and fulnes of the promise, and study with all Saints to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and heighth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, (Eph. 3. 18, 19.) do use to walk more comfortably according to the riches of that grace wch they do posses.

6. Consider also, that most of these complaining Christians are glad that they are in *any measure* got out of their former state, and therefore apprehend their cause to be *better* then it was before: Or else they would turn back to the state that they were in; which they would not do for all the world. And therefore they take a godly life to be far more pleasant to them that do attain it.

7. Moreover, the sorrow of believers is such as may consist with *joy*. At the same time while they are grieved that they are no better, they are gladder of that *measure of grace* which they have received, then they would be to be made the *rulers* of the world. While they are *mourning* for the *remnant* of their *sins*.

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Part II.

A Saint or a Brute.

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But go to those Christians that *know themselves*, and are truly acquainted with their *fraternity* and their *priviledges*, and see whether they walk so uncomfortably as those *mistaken doubting souls*; You will find them in another case, and hear other kind of language from their mouths; even the joyful praises of their *Redeemer*, and the thankful acknowledgements of his abundant *love*. How sweet unto their souls is the remembrance of *kindness*? and how delightful a work is it from day to day to magnifie his name?

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7. Moreover, the *sorrow* of *believers* is such as may consist with *joy*. At the same time while they are grieved that they are no better, they are gladder of that *measure of grace* which they have received, then they would be to be made the *rulers* of the *world*. While they are *mourning* for the *remnant* of their *sins*.

fins, they are glad that it is but a remnant that they have to mourn for. Yea while they are troubled because they doubt of their sincerity and salvation, they are more sustained and comforted with that little discerning which they have of their evidences, and with their hopes of the everlasting love of God, then they could by all your sinful pleasures. Try the most *detested mournful Christian*, whether he would change states and comforts with the best and greatest of the ungodly. The soul of man is so active and comprehensive, that it can at once both *rejoice and mourn*. While they mourn for sin, and feel affliction, believers can have some rejoicing taste of Everlasting Life.

8. Yea the godly sorrow of a believer is the matter of his joy. He is gladder when his heart will melt for sin, then he would be to be *your partner in your carnal pleasures*. He would not change the *comfort* that he findeth in his penitent tears for all your laughter.

9. The Joy of a believer is intimate and solid, as I said before, according to the object of it, and not like the fleeting of a fool, or the laughter of a child, or the sensual mirth that Solomon called *Madness*. And therefore it is not so *discernable* to others as carnal mirth is. And therefore you think that the servants of Christ are void of pleasure when they have *much more* then you. It is little ridiculous accidents and toys that make men *laugh*; but *great things* give us an *inward sweet content and joy*, which scorns to shew it self by *laughter*. And what can be a fitter object of such *great content*, then to be a member of Christ, and an heir of heaven?

10. Moreover, this sorrow of the Godly is but *medicinal*, and a preparative to their *after-joys*: It doth but work out the poison of sin, which would mar their comforts, and drive them to Christ, and fit them to value him, and taste the sweetnes of his love and grace.

11. And as it is not the *state and life* of a Christian, but his *fasting days*, or time of *Physick*, so the *comforts* of the godly ordinarily do far *exceed* their *sorrows*, at least in *weight*, if not in *passionate sense*. They have their hours of sweet access to God, and of heavenly meditation, and delightful remembrance of the experiences of his love, and perusal of his promises, and communion with his people; and of the exercise of faith, and hope,

hope, and love. And with those Christians that have attained stability and strength, these *comforting graces* are predominant : and their life is more in *Love and Praise*, then in vexations fears and sorrows: And it *should be* so with all believers: Love is the Heart of the new creature. It is a life of *Love and Joy and Praise* that Christ calls all his people to ; and forbids them all unnecessary doubts and sorrows ; and keepeth them up so strictly from *sin*, that he may prevent their *sorrows*. And if you will judge whether *Holiness* be a pleasant course, you must goe to the *prescript*, and consider the *nature and use* of *Holiness*, and look at those that live according to the mercies of the *Gospel* ; and not look at the dejections and sorrows of those that grieve themselves by swerving from the way of *Holiness*: as if you would judge that *Health* is unpleasant, because you hear a sick man groan. And yet even these weak and mournful Christians usually have more *joy* then you. The very *preservation* of their souls from that *despair* which *sin* would cast them into if they had not a *Christ* to fly to, and the little *tastes of mercy* which they have felt, and the *revivings* that they find between their sorrows, and the *hopes* they have of better days, are enough to weigh down all your *pleasures* and all their own *sorrows*.

12. Lastly, consider that *this* is not the *life of perfect Joy*, and therefore *some sorrows* will be intermixt. *Comfort* will not be perfect till *Holiness* be perfect ; and till we arrive at the place of *perfect joy*. Whats wanting now while we live in a troublesome malignant world, shall shortly be made up in the *Heavenly Jerusalem*, when we have admittance into our *Masters joy*. And then all the world shall be easily convinced, whether *sin* or *duty*, a *fleshy* or *Holy life*, hath the greater *Pleasures* and contents.

Object. *But it is not only the weakness of professors, but the very way that is prescribed them, that must bear the blame: For they are commanded to fast, and weep, and mourn.*

Answ. 1. That is but with a medicinal necessary sorrow, for preventing of a greater sorrow ; as bitter medicines and blood-letting, and strict diet, are for the prevention of death. God first commandeth them to *take heed of sin*, the cause of sorrow : But if they will fall and break their bones, they must endure the pain of setting them again.

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are commanded to *fast*, and *weep*, and *mourn*.

Answ. 1. That is but with a *medicinal necessary sorrow*, for
preventing of a *greater sorrow* ; as bitter medicines and blood-
letting, and strict diet, are for the prevention of death. God first
commandeth them to *take heed of sin*, the cause of sorrow : But if
they will fall and break their bones, they must endure the pain of
setting them again.

2. And doth not Christ command his servants also to *Rejoyce* ? and *again Rejoyce*, and *always to rejoice* ? Phil. 3.1. &c 4.4. 1 Thes. 5. 16. Doth he not command them to live in the most delightful works of *Love and Joy* and thankful mention of his mercies ? I tell you, if Christians did but live as God requireth them, and by his plenteous mercies doth encourage them to live, they would be the wonder of the world for their exceeding joy ; they would triumph as men that are entering into rest, and make the miserable ungodly Princes and great ones of the world observe their low contemptible condition, and see by the comforts of believers, that there are far higher joys : then theirs to be attained. Did Christians live as God would have them, according to their dignity and felicity, they would make the world admire the spirit, and hopes and comforts that do so transport them ; They would be so taken up in the *Love and praise of their Redeemer*, that they would scarce have leisure to observe whether they be rich or poor, or to regard the honours or dishonours of the world. These little things would scarce find room in their affection, they would be taken up so much with God. If they were sore with scourging, and their feet were in the stocks, they would there sing forth the praise of him that hath assured them of deliverance and everlasting joy, as *Paul* and *Silas* did, *Act. 16*. They would rejoice in poverty, in disgrace, in pain, and nothing would be able to overcome their joy. They would pity the tyrants and sensual Epicures that have no sweeter pleasures then those that the flesh and this deceitful world affords. O the joy that believers would have in their secret prayers ! in their heavenly meditations ! in their holy conference ! in their reading of the promises ! and much more in their publike praises and Communion, if they did but follow more fully the conduct of that spirit that hath undertaken to be their *Comforter* ! What makes believers slight this world, and take all your pleasures to be unworthy of their entertainment or regard, but that they have had a taste of sweeter things, and by faith are overgrown these childish vanities ? If God and his favour be better then such worms as we ; and the heavenly Glory be better then these transitory toyes, you may well conceive that the believers joy, that is fed by these, must be greater, (at least in worth and weight) then all the pleasures of this sublunary world. If therefore you love

love a life of pleasure, come over to Christ, and live a holy heavenly life ; and believe one that hath made some tryal, yea believe the Lord himself, that *Holiness* is the only *Pleasant* life.

And now as we have seen it plainly proved, that the life of *Holiness* is the most *Pleasant* life, so from hence we may see two sorts reproved, that (in different measures) are found to be transgressors.

The first is, Those blind ungodly wretches, that can find no pleasure in a holy life, when they can find pleasure in their worldly drudgery, and in their sensual uncleanness, and their childish vanities. They have the *God of infinite Goodness* to delight in ; but to their impious hearts he seemeth not delightful. They have his *Power*, and *Wisdom*, and *Holiness*, and *Truth to love*, and *Admire*, and *Trust upon*, and his *Excellent works* to behold him in ; and his *holy laws*, and *gracious promises* to meditate on ; but they have small delight in any such employment. They have leave as well as any others to open their hearts to God in secret, and in prayer and praise to recreate their souls, and to hold communion with the *Saints of God*, and to be exercised both in publick and private in his worship, and to order their families in his fear, and to mannage their affairs according to his word : but they find no pleasure in such a life as this, but are as backward to it as if it were a toilesome and unprofitable busines, and are weary of that little outside worship which they do perform. They have *Heaven* set before them to seek after, and to make their portion and delight, but they have small delight to think or speak of it. Their hearts are unsuitable to these high holy and spiritual things. They are matters that they are strange to, and have no firm and confident belief of, but an uncertain wavering weak opinion : and therefore they are too far off, to be their delight. [They say to God, Depart from us ; for we desire not the knowledge of thy way ; What is the Almighty that we should serve him ? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him ? Job 21. 14, 15.] If they do come to the publick Assemblies, and joyn there in the outward part of worship, they find little life and pleasure in it, because they are strangers to the reward and spiritual part which is the kernel. They look more

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at the *Preachers* gifts, and the *manner* of his doctrine and delivery, then at the spiritual necessary *matter* that is delivered. They have some pleasure in a neat composed speech, that seemeth not to accuse them any more then others, and gratheth not on their tender ears with plain and necessary truth; but suffers them to go home as quietly as they came thither. But if the Preacher touch them to the quick, and endeavonrith faithfully to acquaint them with themselves, or if he have no eloquence or accuratenes of speech to please them with, but be guilty of any unhandsomness of expression, or modall imperfections, they are weary of hearing him, and think it long till the glas be run, and perhaps instead of *tasting the sweetnes of wholsome truth*, they make it the matter of their derision and contempt.

But let them be at Cards or Dice, at Hawking or Hunting, at any idle sports and vanities, and they can hold out longer with delight. At drinking, or feasting, or idle talking, they are not so weary. Yea in the labours of their calling, when their bodies are weary, their minds are more unwearied; and in their fields and shops they have *more delight*, then in the spiritual holy service of the Lord. They are never so merry as when there is least of God upon their hearts and in their wayes. And it is *one* of the reasons that hindreth their *Conversion*, lest it should deprive them of their *mirth*, and cause them to spend the remainder of their dayes in uncomfortable heavyness. If *sin* were not *sweet* to them, *conversion* would be *more easie*: The *Pleasure* which they find in creatures by their *sin*, is the prison and fetters of their souls captivity. If this be *thy* case that readest these lines, I beseech thee lay to heart these following aggravations of thy *sin*.

1. How *blind* and *wicked* is the heart that can find more *pleasure* in *sin* than *holiness*? Is the *creature* *pleasant* to thee, and *God* *unpleasant*? What a shame is this to thy *Understanding* and thy *Will*? It proclaimeth thy pernicious *Folly* and *Impiety*. If thou hadst no more wit then to be *Pleased* more with *stones* then *gold*, with *dung* then *meat*, with *shameful nakedness* then *cloathing*, thou wouldest not be judged *wise* enough to be left to thy own dispose and government. But the folly which thou dost manifest, is unspeakably greater. *Darkness* is not so much worse then *Light*, and *Death* is not so much worse then *Life*; as *sin* is worse than *Holiness*, and the *world* than *God*. And is the *World* more *Pleasant* to thee then the *Best*? It is a *fool* indeed, to whom

it is a sport to do mischief, *Prov. 10. 23.* and so great a mischief as sin is : and yet hath no delight in understanding, *Prov. 18. 2.* Delight is not seemly for such fools, *Prov. 19. 10.*

And how wicked is that Heart as well as Blind, that is so averse to God and Holiness ? Doth not this shew thee, 1. The absence of Gods holy image, 2. And the presence of Satans image upon thy soul ?

Nothing doth more certainly prove what a man is, then the complacency and displacency of his Heart. If you know what it is in your selves or others, that pleaseth and displeaseth most, you may certainly know whether you have the spirit and grace of Christ or not. This is the durable infallible Evidence, which Satan shall never be able to invalidate, and which the weakest Christians can scarce tell how to deny in themselves : Could they be more Holy, it would please them better then to be more rich : Could they believe more, and Love God more, and trust him more, and obey him better, it would please them more then if you gave them all the honours of the world : They are never so well pleased with their own hearts, as when they find them nearest Heaven, and have most of the Knowledge of God, and imprels of his attributes, and sense of his presence. They are never so well pleased with their lives, as when they are most holy and fruitful, and may fullyest be called *A walking with God.* They are never so much displeased with themselves, as when they find least of God upon their hearts, and are most dark, and dull, and undisposed to holy Communion with him. They are never so much weary of themselves, as when their lives are least fruitful, holy and exact. And this is a certain Evidence of their sincerty : For it shews what they Love, and what it is that hath their Hearts or Wills. And it is the Heart or Will that is the man, in Gods account. God takes a man to be what he sincerely would be. As he is, so he Loveth and Willetth : and as he Loveth and Willetth, such he is. His complacency or displacency are the immediate sure discoveries of his bent or inclination : This certain Evidence poor doubting souls should have oft recourse to, and improve.

And on the contrary, it is as sure an Evidence of your misery, when you favour not the ills of the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7.* and when it pleaseth you more to be great, then to be good; to be rich, then to be religious and righteous; to serve your lusts, then to serve the Lord : When you set more by the applause of men, then

by the approbations of God: and had rather be far from God then near him, and be excused from a holy life then used to it, and constant in it: When you take the world and sin for your recreation or delight, and a godly life for a melancholy, wearisom, and unpleasant course: This certainly shews that you have yet the old corrupted nature, and Serpentine enmity against the Spirit and Life of Christ, and are yet in the flesh, and therefore can no more please the Lord, then his holy wayes are pleasing unto you, Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8. and it prooveth that you are yet in the gall of bitterness, and the bonds of your iniquity, and that your hearts are not right in the sight of God, and that you are the slaves of Satan, whose nature you partake of, by which you are thus alienated from the Lord.

Didst thou know God as Faith doth know him, his *Loving kindness* would be better to thee then life it self, Psalm 63. 3. If thou didst *Love him* (as it is like thou wilt pretend thou dost) it would be meat and drink to thee, to enjoy his *Love*, and do his *Will*. And if thou know him not by *Faith*, nor cleavest to him by unfeigned *Love*, how canst thou pretend to have his *Image*?

How would you judge of that mans heart, that were no better affected to his friend, to his parents, or children, or other relations, then you manifest your selves to be to God? If he can take no pleasure in the company of his wife or children, but is glad when he is far from them, in the company of strangers, or harlots, or prodigals, would you not say this man had a base unmanly disposition? Express but such an inclination in plain words, and try how honest sober men will judge of them. Much more would it be odious to Christian ears, if you should tell God plainly, [We can find no pleasure in thee, or in thy holy wayes; thy Word and Service are unsavoury and wearisom unto us: We had rather be talking or busied about the matters of the world: We have far more pleasure in recreations and sensual accommodations, then in remembraunce of thee and thy Kingdom, and then we find in the life that is called holy.] Would not such words as these be called *impious*, by every Christian that should hear them? And is not that an *impious heart* then, which speaketh thus, or is thus affected, and that an *impious life* that manifesteth it? though dissembling lips are ashamed to profess it?

If God be not most to be loved and delighted in, then any thing or

or all things else, he is not God. If Heaven and Holiness be not sweeter then all the pleasures of earth and sin, let them have no more such honourable names. Let *sin* and *earth* then be called *Heaven*; but wo to them that have no better.

2. What *monstrous ingratitude* is that man guilty of, that when *God* hath *provided*, and *Christ* hath *purchased* such high delights, and freely tendered them to unworthy sinners, will say, I find no pleasure in them, and take them for no delights at all? When the Lord beheld thee wallowing in thy filth, and laughing in thy misery, and making a sport of thine own perdition, he pittied thee, and provided and offered to thee the most noble and excellent delights, that thy nature is capable of enjoying: And wilt thou cast them back unthankfully in his face, and say, They are unpleasant tedious things? If your child did so by his meat or cloathes, yea or a beggar at your door did so by his alms, you would think it proved his great unworthyness: If he throw away the best you can give him, and say, [It is naught, there is no sweetnes in it] would you not think it fit that *want* should help to mend his *relif*, and cure his *ingratitude*? And will you do so your selves by Christ and Holiness, and say as those, *Mal. 1. 13.* What a *weariness* is it? Take heed lest you provoke the Lord to cast you into a state in which you shall have more cause to be aweary. If you are weary of reading, and praying, and hearing, and other holy exercises, and weary of heart-searching, penitent meditations, will you not be *wearier* of *Hell-fire*, and of the dolorous reviews of this your folly, and of the endless, easelss, remediless sense of the wrath of *God*, and gripes of your own self-tormenting consciences! How just is it with *God* to give those men somewhat that they have *cause* to be aweary of, that will be thus aweary of his sweetest service, and reject the greatest mercies he can offer them, as if they were some burdensome worthless things!

3. Will you have any pleasure at all, or will you have none? If any, in what then will you place it, and whence will you expect it, if not from *God* in a holy life? If *God* be thy trouble, what then is fit to be thy *delight*? Darest thou say in thy heart or with thy tongue, that *sin* and *sensuality* is better? Darest thou say that a good bargain, or other worldly gain, or cards, or dice, or other sports, or ease, or good cheer, or an *Ale-house*, or a *Whore*, are *pleasanter* things then walking with *God* in *faith* and *holiness*,

liness, and expectation of the everlasting joyes ? Heaven and earth shall bear witness against thee, and common Reason shall bear witness against thee, for this inhumane, impious folly and ingratitude, if ever thou appear at the barr of God, with the guile of such unreasonable sin. What ! is God no better in thine eyes, then a filthy brutish sinful pleasure ? and is the *Love of God* no sweeter a work, then the *Love of sensual delights* ! Saith blessed *Augustine*, *He that will sell or exchange his soul for transitory commodities, doth censure Christ to be a foolish Merchant, that knew no better what he did, when he gave his Life for those souls, than you will not lose a sin for.* So I may say here : Hath Christ bought for you Holy and Everlasting pleasures, at the price of his own most bitter pains, and precious blood, and do you now think them no better then your fleshly beastly delights ? Is it Christ or you, think you, that is mistaken in the value of them ? Did he shed his blood to purchase you that which is not worth the parting with a cup of drink for, or the parting with your pleasure, or unjust commodity for ? Sure he that judgeth thus of Christ, is far from believing in him, with any true Christian saving Faith.

4. If you can find *no pleasure in God* and in a *holy life*, you may be sure that *he will have no pleasure in you*. Wonder not if you find in your greatest need, that you are abhorred and loathed by the *Lord*, when *you loathed* the very thoughts and mention of *him*, in the day of your visitation. Marvail not if the most Holy God do take *no pleasure in a loathsome sinner*, when the sinner is so ungodly, that he *takes more pleasure* in the most sordid fading trifles then in *God*. You may offer the sacrifice of your heartless hypocritical prayers and praises unto God, and he will count them *abomination*, and cast them back as dung into your faces, and tell you that he *bath no pleasure in the sacrifice of such fools* : Read it in his own words, *Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. Isa. 1. 13. Eccles. 5. 4.* As *you are weary of serving him*, so he is weary of *your services*, and it is a trouble to him to bear them, and when *you spread forth your hands*, he will hide his eyes from you, yea when *you make many prayers* he will not hear, *Isa. 1. 14, 15.* When the Jews offered their lame deceitful sacrifices, and said, [Behold what a weariness is it ?] God sends them word, that he *bath no pleasure in them*, nor would *regard their persons*, nor *accept a sacrifice at their hands*, *Mal. 1. 8, 9, 10.* and their solemn feasts he counteth [dung];

[*dung*]: And *dung* would be no acceptable present or feast to your selves, if it were offered you instead of meat, *Mat. 2. 3.* [*My soul (faith the Lord) loathed them, and their soul abhorred me*] *Zeck 11. 8.* As he that despiseth him, shall be lightly esteemed by him, *1 Sam. 2. 30.* So he that *loatheth him*, shall be loathed by him. [*If any man draw back, saith the Lord, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*] *Heb. 10. 38.* For he is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him: the foolish shall not stand in his sight: he hateth all the workers of iniquity, *P/alm 5. 4, 5.* And little do you now imagine what a horrour it will be to you in the day of your extremity for God to tell you that he hath no pleasure in you: When you look before you into an eternity of woe, which you have no hope to escape but by the mercy of the Lord, and he shall dash that *hope* by telling you that he hath no pleasure in you, it will give your souls the deadly wound that never shall be healed. In vain then shall you wish that you had chosen in time the *durable delights*, and not the pleasures of *filthy sin* for so short a season: and to your torment you shall know, whether God or the world was more worthy of your sweetest affections and delights: and how deservedly they are [*all damned that abjured not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, 2 Thes. 2. 12.*] *Who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them, Rom. 1. 32.* If you will count it your pleasure to *riot in the day-time*, rather then to *walk and work by the light*, you must look to receive the due reward of such *unrighteousness*, *2 Pet. 2. 13.* If it be your sport to sin and to do *mischief*, (*Prov. 10. 23.*) you shall have small sport in suffering the punishment of your willful folly.

3. If *God and Holiness* seem not *pleasant* to you, then *Heaven* it self cannot seem *pleasant* to you, if you consider it *truly as it is*. For the *Heavenly felicity* consisteth in the *perfection* of our *Holiness*, and the *perfect fruition* of *God himself*, by *Sight*, and *Love*, and *Joy* for ever. If the little *Holiness* be *unpleasant* and *irksome* to you, which appeareth in the *imperfect Saints* on earth, what *pleasure* could you take in that *superviscent Holiness*; which is the *state and work* of the *celestial inhabitants*? If the *thoughts* and *mention* of *God* be *unpleasant* to you, and his *holy praises* do seem to you as *matters of no delight*, What then would you do

in heaven where this must be your everlasting work? And if Heaven seem a place of toyle and trouble to you, how just will it be that you are everlastingly shut out? How can you for shame *beg* of God to *glorify* you, when you take the *Glory* that he hath promised for a *miserie*? If you think that there is a Heaven of such sensual pleasures as you desire, or that any shall be saved that only choose Heaven as a less and more tolerable misery then Hell, you will shortly find your expectations deceived.

Lay all these five considerations together, and you may perceive what miserable souls those are, that can find pleasure in perishing trifles of the world, and none in a Holy and Heavenly life. Be assured of this, whosoever thou art, that if God and Heaven and a Holy life, be not a thousand times sweeter and more delightful to thee, then any thing that this world can afford to thy contentment, it is not for want of matter of supersubtantial delight to be found in God and in his holy ways; but it is for want of reason, or faith, or consideration, or a suitable Heart in thee, which may make thee fit to know and taste the pleasures which now thou art unacquainted with. And is it not pitiful that such infinite delights should be set before men, and they should lose them all for want of a Heart and appetite to them? and should perish by choosing the lowest vanities before them?

I do therefore earnestly beseech thee that readest these words, if thou be one of these unhappy souls, that canst find no pleasure in God and Holiness, that thou wouldest speedily observe and lament that blindnes and wickedness of thy heart, that is the cause of this infatuation and corruption of thine apprehension and rational appetite: and that thou wouldest presently apply thy self to Christ for the cure of it; To which end I advise thee to these following means.

Dir. Ch. I. If you wouldest the pleasure of a holy life, bethink you better of the necessity and excellency of it; and cast away your prejudice and false conceits, which have deceived you, and turned your minds against it: A child may be deluded to take his own Father for his enemy, if he see him in an enemies garb, or be perswaded by false suggestions that he hateth him. A man

man may be perswaded to hate his meat, if you can but make him believe that it is poison : or to hate his cleaſe, if you can make him believe they are infected with the plague. If you will ſuffer your understandings to be deluded, ſo far as to overlook the amiable nature of holineſt, and to think the image of God is but a fancie, or that a heavenly life is nothing but hypocriſie, and that it is but pride that maketh men ſeek to be holier then others, and that makes them they cannot goe quietly to Hell in deſpight of the commands and mercieſ of the Lord, as others do : I ſay, if the Devil the great deceiver, can poſſeſſ you with ſuch frankick thoughts as theſe, what wonder if you hate the very name of Holineſt ? How can you haue pleaſure in the greatest good, while you take it for an ioll ? If you will believe all that the Devil and his foolish malicioſe instruments ſay of God and of a holy life, you ſhall never love God, nor ſee any lovelineſt, or taste any ſweetneſt in his ſervice.

Dir. 2. Come neare and ſearch into the inwards of a holy life, and try it a little while your ſelves, if you would take the pleaſure of it : and do not ſtand looking on it at a diſtance, where you ſee nothing but the outside : nor judge by bare heareſay, which giveth you no taste or reliſh of it. The ſweetneſt of honey, or wine, or meat is not known by looking on it, but by tasting it. Come neare and try what it is to live in the Love of God, and in the belief and hope of life eternal, and in universal obedience to the laws of Christ : and then tell us how theſe things do reliſh with you. You will never know the ſweetneſt of them effectually, as long as you are but lookers on. It was the ſimiſtude which Peter Martyr uſed in a Sermon, which converted the Noble Neopolitan Marquell of Vicen, Gallicanus Caraccioli, (who fortook wife, and children, and houſes, and lands, and countrey, and all for the liberty of the Reformed Religion at Geneva:) ſaith he, [If you ſee the motion of dancers afar off, and hear not the Muſick, you will think they are frankick : but when you come neare and hear the muſick, and obſerve their harmonical orderly motion, you will take delight in it, and deſire to joyne with them.] So men that judge at a diſtance of the truſt and holy ways of God, by the ſlanderous reports of malignt men, will think of the godly as Feſtus of Pan that they are beſide themſelves. But if they come among them, and ſearch more impaſſionately into the reaſon of their countrey, and ſpecially

if they joyn with them in the *inwards* and *vital actions* of religion, they will then be quickly of another mind, and not go back for all the pleasures or profits of the world. In the works of Nature, (and sometimes of Art) the *outside* is so far from shewing you the excellencies, that it is but a *comely vail* to *hide* them. Though you would have a handsome *cover* for your *watch*, yet doth it but *hide* the well ordered *frame*, and *useful* *motions* that are *within* : You must *open* it, and there observe the parts and motions, if you would pass a right judgement of the work. You would have a *comely cover* for your *Books* : but it is but to *hide* the well composed letters from your sight, in which the *sense* and *use* and *excellency* doth consist. You must *open* it, if you will *read* it and know the *worth* of it. A common *spectator* when he seeth a *Rose* or other flower or fruit-tree, thinketh he hath seen all, or the *chiefest* part : But it is the *secret* *unsearchable* *motions* and *operations* of the *vegetative* *life* and *juice* *within*, by which the *beauteous* flowers and *sweet* *fruits* are produced, and wonderfully differenced from each other that are the *excellent* part, and *mysteries* in these *natural* *works* of *God*. Could you but see these *secret* *inward* *causes* and *operations*, it would incomparably more content you. He that passeth by and looketh on a *Bee-hive*, and seeth but the *Cover*, and the *laborious* *creatures* going in and out, doth see *nothing* of the admirable *operations* *within*, which *God* hath taught them : Did you there see how they make their *wax* and *honey*, and compose their *combs*, and by what *laws*, and in what *order* their *Commonwealth* is governed, and their *work* carried on, you would know more then the *out* *side* of the *hive* can shew you. So it is about the *life* of *Godliness*: If you saw the *inward* *motions* of the *quickening* *spirit* upon the *soul*, and the *order* and *exercise* of every *grace*, and by what *laws* the *thoughts* and *affections* are governed, and to whom they tend, you would then see more of the *beauty* of *Religion*, then you can see by the *outward* *behaviour* of our *assemblies*. The *shell* is not *sweet* ; but serves to *hide* the *sweeter* *part*, from those that will not *form* those *walls*, that they may possess it as their *prize*. The *kernel* of *Religion* is covered with a *shell* so *hard* that *flesh* and *blood* cannot break it ; *Hard sayings*, and *hard* *providences*, to the *Church*, and to particular *believers*, are such as many cannot *break* through, and therefore never taste the *sweetness*. The most *admired* feature and

and beauty of any of your bodies, (which fools think to be the most excellent part of the body) is indeed but the handsome well-adorned case, that God by nature doth cover his more excellent inward works with. Were you but able to see within that skin, and ~~and~~ once to observe the wonderful motions of Heart and Braine, and the course of the blood in the veins and arteries, and the several fermentations, and the causes and nature of chylifications, and sanguifications, and the spirits and senses and all their works: and if you saw the reason of every part and vessel in this wonderous frame; and the causes and nature of every disease; much more if you saw the excellent nature and operations of that rational soul, that is the glory of all; you would then say that you had seen a more excellent gift, than the *smooth and beauteous skin* that covers it: The *invisible soul* is of greater excellencie then all the *visible beauties* in the world. So also if you would know the excellencies of Religion, you must not stand *without the doors*, or judge of it by the *skin and shell*, but you must *come near*, and look into the *inward Reasons* of it, and think of the *difference* between the high employments of a Saint, and the poor and sordid drudgery of the ungodly, between walking with God, in desire, and love, and in the spiritual use of his Ordinances and creatures, and conyersing only with sinful men, and transitory vanities: between the life of faith and hope, which is daily maintained by the foresight of Everlasting Glory, and a life of meer nature and worldliness and sensuality, and idle complement and pompe, which are but the progenitors of sorrow, and end in endless desperation. Come neer, and try the power of Gods Laws, and of the workings of his spirit; and think in good sadness of the place where you must live forever, and the glory you shall see; and the sweet enjoyment and employment you shall have in the presence of the eternal Majesty, and think well of all the sweet contrivances and discoveries of his love in Christ; and how freely all these are offered to you; and how certainly they may be your own; peruse the promises and sweet expressions of Love and Grace; and exercise your souls in serious meditation, prayer, thanksgiving, and praise; and withall remember, that none but these will be durable delights; and then tell me, whether a life of sport and pride, and worldliness, and flesh-pleasing, or a life of faith and Holiness, be the better, the sweeter, and more pleasant life.

Direct. 3. If you would taste the Pleasures of a Holy life, you must apply your self to Christ in the use of his appointed means, for the renewing of your natures: that his Spirit may give you a new understanding and a new heart, to discern and relish spiritual things: For your old corrupted minds and hearts will never do it. They are unsuitable to the things of God, and therefore cannot receive them, nor savour them, nor be subject to the holy laws, 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. Rom. 8. 5. 6, 7, 8. The appetite and relish of every living creature is agreeable to its nature. A fish hath small pleasure in the dry land; nor a bird in the deeps of water; grass and water is sweeter to an ox than our most delicate meats and drinks. Corruption and Custom have made you so vicious, that your natures are not such as God made them at the first, when he himself was man, desire and delights: but they are now inclined to sensual things, being captivated by the fleshly part, and have contracted a strangeness and enmity to God. And therefore those Hearts will never relish the sweetenesses of a life of Faith, and Holiness, till Faith and Holiness be planted in them, and they be born again by regenerating grace: For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, (and by flesh; and therefore doth reach no higher then a fleshly inclination can move it); and that which is born of the spirit is spirit; and therefore will relish and love things spiritual only.

Direct. 4. Lastly, if you would taste the pleasures of a Holy life, you must forsake those sinful fleshly pleasures, which now you are so taken up with. For these are they that infatuate your understandings, and corrupt your appetites, and make the sweetest things seem loathsome to you. As the using of vain sports, and filthy lust, abroad, doth make such persons a weary of their own relations, and families, and business at home; so also the glutting of the mind with vanity, and using your selves to sinful pleasures, is it that turns your hearts from God, and maketh his Word and Wayes unsavoury to you. You must first with the Prodigal, Luke 15, be brought into a famine of your former pleasures, and be denied the very bush, and then you will remember that the meanest servant in your Fathers house is in a far better case then you, having bread enough, while you perish through hunger. And hence it is that God doth so often promote the work of Conversion by afflictions, and by divers painful exerciseth in the work of Grace, more then he will say: Canst you not behold

to leave your sensual pleasures? What will you do when sickness makes you weary of them? Weary of your *meat*, and *drink*, and *bed*; weary to hear talk of that which now doth seem so sweet? and to say, *I have no pleasure in them?* Cannot you spare your friends, your sports, your *bravery*, your wealth and other carnal accommodations? What will you say of them, when pain dis-*graceth* them, and convinceth you of their insufficiency to stand you in any stead? These things that you are now so loth to leave, may shortly become such a load to your souls, as undigested meat to the stomach that is sick, that you can have no ease till you have cast them off.

Away therefore with these lascious Vanities betime, which vitiate your appetites, and put them out of relish with the things that are truly pleasant. O what a shame it is to hear a man say [I shall never endure so godly, and spiritual, and strict a life] when he can endure and take pleasure in a life of sin! You may wiselijer lie down in the dunghill or the ditch and say, [I shall never endure a cleaner place;] or feed on corruption, and say, [I shall never endure a cleaner dyet;] or accompany only with enemies and wild beasts, and say [I shall never endure the company of my friends.] What! is God *worse* then the creature, and Heaven then earth? and *so much worse*, as not to be endured in your thoughts and affections in comparison of them? You will never know your friends till you forsake these *disorders*? Nor ever know the *Pleasures* of a Holy life, till you will let go the *peynous Pleasures* of sin. And then you may find that *Sanctification* *destroyeth* not, but *changeth* and *recovereth* your *Delights*; and giveth you safety for the greatest peril, health for sickness, friends for enemies, gold for dross, life for death, and the fore-taste of Rest for tiring vexation.

2. **T**HE second sort that are hence to be Reproved, are, *Those weak and troubled servants of the Lord, that live as sadly as if they found more grief than pleasure in the power of God.*

Indeed it is to be lamented that few of the heirs of life do live according to the happiness and dignity of their Calling; nor are the great things that God intendeth for them so apparent in the cheerfulness and comforts of their lives as they should be: But some

Souls that are addicted to dejection, do in a greater measure wrong Christ and themselves, being always feeding upon secret griefs, and torturing themselves with doubts and fears, and acquainted with almost no other language but lamentations, self-accusations and complaints. These poor souls usually discover honest hearts, that are weary of sin, and low in their own eyes, and long to be better, and do not dis-regard the matters of their salvation as dead-hearted ungodly sinners do. Their *complaints* shew what they *would be*: and what they *would be* sincerely, that they *are* in Gods account. But yet they live so far below the sweet delights which they might partake of, and so far below the provisions of their Fathers house, and the riches of the Gospel, that they have cause to lament their *excessive lamentations*, and more cause to reform this sad distemper, and no cause to indulge it, as usually such do. And though with the most of them some natural passions and weaknesses, and some melancholy distempers are so much the cause, as may much excuse them, yet because it is an evil which *may be deserved*, and *Reason* must be the *means*, where people have the *freedom* of *Reason*, I shall lay down some of the great inconveniences of this sad distemper, and beseech those that render the honour of God, and would do that which is most pleasing to him, and love not their own calamity, that they will soberly consider of what I say, and labour to regulate their minds accordingly.

1. I desire the dejected Christian to consider, that by his heavy and uncomfortable life, he serveth to the world to accuse God and his service, as if he openly called him a rigorous, hard, unacceptable master, and his work a sad unpleasant thing. I know this is not your thoughts: I know it is *your selves* and not God and his service that offendeth you; and that you walk not heavily because you *are holy*, but because you *fear* you *are not* holy, and because you *are no more* *holy*: I know it is not of *grace*, but *for grace* that you complain. But do you not give too great occasion to ignorant spectators to judge otherwise? If you see a servant always sad, that was wont to be merry while he served another master, will you not think that he hath a master that displeaseth him? If you see a woman live in continual heaviness ever since she was married, that lived merrily before, will you not think that she hath not within an unpleasing match? You are born and *created* for Gods honour; and will you thus *despise* him

him before the world ? What do you (in their eyes) but dispraise him by your very countenance and carriage , while you walk before him in so much heaviness ! The child that still cryes when you put on his *shoes* , doth signifie that they pinch him : and he dispraiseth his *meat* that makes a *sorer face* at it : And he dispraiseth his *friend* , that is alway sad and troubled in his company ! He that should *say* of God [*Thou art bad, or cruel and unmerciful*] should blaspheme. And so would he that saith of Holiness [*It is a bad, unpleasant, hurtful state.*] How then dare you *do* that which is so *like* to such blaspheming ? when you should abstain from all appearance of evil ? 1 Thes. 5. 22. Canst thou find in thy heart thus to dishonour and wrong the God whom thou so much esteemest , and the grace which thou so much desirest ? For a wicked man that is far from God , to go heavily or roar in the horrour of his soul , is a shame to his *sex* , but no dishonour to God and Holiness . But for *you* that are near him , in relation , engagement , and attendance , to walk so heavily , reflects on him to whom you are Related , and from whom you look for your Reward .

2. Consider also , *What a lamentable hinderance you are hereby to the conversion and salvation of souls ?* Your countenances and sad complainings do affright men from the service of the Lord , and as it were call to them , to keep off and fly from the way that you find so grievous . You gratifie Satan , the enemy of Christ , and Holiness , and souls , and become his instruments (though against your wills) to affright men from the way of life . As the Papists keep their deluded Proselytes abroad from *Truth and Reformation* , by giving them odious descriptions of the Protestants , as if they were Hereticks , proud , frantick , mad , and scarcely men , and when they burn them , they adorn them with pictures of the Devil ; even so doth Satan keep poor souls from entertaining Christ and Truth , and entering the holy pathes , by making them believe that the servants of Christ are a company of distempered melancholy souls , and that Godliness is the way to make men mad ; and that he that will set his heart on Heaven , must never look more for a merry comfortable life on earth . Hence comes the proverb of the Malignant Formalists and Prophane , that *A Puritan is a Protestant frightened out of his wits.* And will you *confirm* this slander of the Devil and his instruments ? Will you entice men to believe him ? Will you make

make your selves such pictures of unhappiness? and wear such a Vizor of calamity and misery, as shall frighten all that look on you and observe you, and discourage them from the way which they see accompanied with so much sorrow? As you hang up dead crows in your field to frighten the rest from the Corn, and as murderers are hanged in irons to terrifie all that see them from that crime, or as the heads of Traytors are set up to the same end, as proclaiming to all passengers, [*Thus must you be used if you will do as they :*] Just so would Satan fill you with terrors, and overwhelm you with grief, and distract you with causeless doubts and fears, that you may appear to the world a miserable sort of people; and then all that look on you will be afraid of Godliness, and think they see it as it were written in your fore-heads, [*Such drooping pittiful creatures must all be, that will lead so precise and heavenly a life.*] Do you think your carnal neighbours and acquaintance will not be deterred from a holy life, when they see that since you turned to it, you do nothing but complain, and droop, and mourn, as if you were worse then you were before? And was it not enough that you hindered their conversion before, when you were in your ignorance and sin, by your wicked examples and encouragements, but you must hinder it still by your dejected discouraging countenances and conversations? Yea perhaps your later excessive troubles may do more to hinder their conversion, then your persuasions and examples did before. And can you find in your hearts to lay such a stumbling block as this in the way of your miserable acquaintance, to keep them from salvation? Will it not grieve you to think that you should have so great a hand in mens damnation, even since you are returned to God your selves? I know by your sorrows and complaints, that the perdition of a soul is no small matter in your eyes: O therefore take heed of that which may procure it. The use that Satan would have you make of these very words is, to go away with more dejection, and to say, [*What a wretch am I? even unmeet to live, but by my griefs am not only miserable my self, but also hinder the salvation of others:*] And thus he would draw thee to grieve over all thy griefs again, and because thou hast exceeded in thy sorrows, to be more excessive: and so to add one sin unto another; and to do more, because you have done too much: So that grief is all that he can allow thee; and one grief shall

shall be made the reason of another, that thou maist run thus in a round of misery, and stop in grieving, and go no further: Whereas thou shouldest so grieve for such grief as may call thee off, and stay thy grieving: and thy repenting should be the cure and forsaking of thy sin, and not the renewal of it.

But on the other side, if thou couldst live a heavenly joyful life, that the glory of thy hopes might appear in thy countenance, thy conference and conversation, how many might hereby be drawn to Christ, and caused to think well of the ways of God? Did the Godly but exceed the rest of the world, in *holy joy* and *cheerfulness* of mind, as much as they exceed them in happiness and in the *causes* of true joy, what an honour would it be to Christ and holiness? and what an attractive to win the ignorant to embrace the motions of salvation? How easily would they let go their sinful pleasures, their gluttony, and drunkenness, and filthiness, and gaming, if they did but see by the carriage of believers, that they were like to exchange them for *much greater joys*? You cannot expect that ignorant men, that never tryed a holy life, and have a natural enmity against it, should see the excellency of it immediately in it self; But they will judge of Religion by the persons that profess it: That shall seem to them the best Religion, that hath the best and happiest professors: And those seem to them the happiest and best, that have the greatest comforts, and conquer most the troubles of their minds. You can expect no other, but that countrey people, that know not the nature of medicines themselves, should judge of them by the success, and think that he followeth the best advice, who is most healthful, and of longest life. And so will the ignorant judge of the holy doctrine and commands of God, by the lives of those that seem to follow them. O therefore behave your selves in the Church of God, as those that remember, that they live in the presence of a world of men, whose happiness or misery hath much dependance on your lives. If you were debating the case with a sensual wretch, would you not tell him that Holiness is a state of greater pleasure then his sin? Tell him so then by your example as well as by your words: Let him see as well as bear of the confidence and comforts of true believers. Were Christianity exemplified in the lives of Christians, how excellent a state would it appear? were we but such as the holy doctrine and

and Christian pattern requireth us to be, even the blind malicious world would be forced to admire the attainments of the Saints: Though they might hate them, yet they would admire them. Were we such as *Stephen*, that was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and could stedfastly look up to heaven by faith, and see there the Glory of the living God, and Jesus standing at his right hand, till we were raised to his boldness in defence of the truth, and his quiet submission to the greatest sufferings, the world would not then be able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which we speak, but the faces of believers would sometime appear to the terror of their persecutors, as the faces of Angels; as *Act. 6. 5, 10, 15. & 7. 51, 55, 56, 60.* They are high and glorious things that are assured to us in the promises of the Gospel. Did but these things appear, in the stedfast faith, the confident hopes, desires, and joys of us that do expect them, believers then would be the wonder of the world; and our joys would so shame their dreaming, childish, brutish pleasures, that doubtless multitudes would flock in, to see what it is that so delighteth us, that they might be made partakers of our joys. Even as *Simon Magus* himself when he saw the Miraculous guift of the Holy Ghost, would fain have bought that guift with money; so men that are yet carnal, in the gall of bitterness and bond of their iniquities, will yet see a desirable excellency in the Joy of the Holy Ghost, and wish they were partakers of such joys, though yet they are unacquainted with the way to attain it.

I do therefore intreat you all that believe and hope for an everlasting Crown, that you will shew the poor deceived world the preciousness of your faith and hopes, and the high prerogative of the Saints, in your unanswerable cheerfulness and joy, and live not with as dead and uncomfortable hearts as those that have nothing but a vexatious transitory world to comfort them: much less to be *more dejected* then these wretched souls. Do you not desire the conversion of your carnal friends, and all about you? would you not be glad if you could further it? O that you could try this pleasant way! and shew them that you have found the unvaluable treasure! And as the Rich live in greater pompe, and at higher rates then the poor, so you that speak of the Riches of Grace, and live in the family of the Lord, O shew the world the dignity of your state, by your

your holy courage and comfortable behaviour, and by your living above the pleasures and griefs of unbelievers ! When they glory in their prosperity, do you Glory in the Lord : When they boast themselves in their riches or reputation, do you imitate holy David who professeth, Psal. 34. 1, 2, 3. [*I will bless the Lord at all times : his praise shall continually be in thy mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord : the humble shall hear thereof and be glad : O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us all call his name together.*] And Psal. 44. 8. [*In God will we boast all the day long, and praise thy Name for ever.*] By such spiritual joyfulness your lives would be a continued Sermon ; and you might thus preach home more souls to Christ, than the most excellent preacher by bare persuasions. Poor sinners would begin to pity themselves that live so far below the Saints ; and they would think with themselves [*It is not for nothing that these men rejoice, and are comfortable even in the loss of all those things that we take all our comfort in !*] For the honour of your dearest Lord, and for your own felicity, and for the sake of the miserable souls about you, I beseech you Christians do your best to reach this sweet and joyfullest life, and to avoid those inordinate troubles and despondencies which are like to cross these blessed ends. And pray for me and the rest of his servants, that the Lord will forgive us our dishonouring of his name, our wronging our own souls, and our discouraging the world from living unto God, by our living so far below his mercies, and so unanswerable to the unspeakable treasures of his Saints : and that for the time to come, we may lay this duty more to heart, and by the comforting spirit may be elevated to the performance of it.

But I suppose some will say [*To tell me how I should live for the encouragement of others is but to draw me to an hypocritical affectation and counterfeiting of joy and courage ; as long as I am unable inwardly to rejoice, and can see no sufficient cause of my rejoicing in my self.*]

*Ans*w 1. I shall by and by shew you that you have sufficient, yea unspeakable cause of joy. 2. And now I shall only say that you are not to suspend and forbear your comfort, till you have full assurance of your own sincerity : your probabilities, and weakest faith, and hope, will warrant a more comfortable life then you can live. And it is not hypocrisy, but a necessary

duty to do the outward actions that are here commanded us, though we cannot reach to that degree of inward comfort that we desire : For we do not hereby affirm our selves to have the joy which we have not : (I am not perswading any man to lye :) but only we express as fully as we are able that little which we have : And a little indeed, a very little of such a high and heavenly nature, grounded on the smallest hopes of everlasting life, will allow you in the expression of it, to transcend the greatest delights of the ungodly : And also we do perform the external part, both as a commanded duty, and as a means to further the inward rejoicing of the soul. So outward solemnity and feasting in dayes of Thanksgiving, are as well to further inward Joy, as to express it : Even as mean attire, and fasting, and humblest prostrations before the Lord, on dayes of Humiliation, are as much to further inward Humiliation as to express it. The behaviour of the body hath an operative reflexion on the mind : and therefore should be used not only for the discovery, but for the cure of the soul. If you cannot restrain your anger as you desire, it is no hypocrisy, but your duty to hide it, and to refrain from the sinful effects. And if you can but use your selves some time to behave your selves in your anger, as if you had no anger, in meeknes of speech and quietness of deportment, anger it self will be the quicklyer subdued, and in time will be the easier kept out. If you cannot restrain your inordinate appetite to meat or drink, for quality or quantity ; it is yet no hypocrisy, but your duty, to hold your hands and shut your mouths and refrain the things to which you have an appetite. And if you will but use your selves a convenient time to forbear the thing, you will subdue the appetite. If the drunkard will forbear the drink, and the glutton his too much desired dish, and the sportful gamesters their needless and sinful recreations, they will find that the fire of sensuality will go out, for want of fuel. As the too wanton Poet saith concerning wanton Love,

*Intrat amor mentes nisu : dediscit nru nsu :
Qui poterit sanum fingere, sanus erit.*

Use kindleth it : and use quencheth it : He that can but live as a sound man, shall at last become a sound man. If you cannot overcome your inward pride as you desire, you must not therefore speak

speak big, and look high, and swagger it out in bravery, and accompany with gallants, to avoid *Hypocrise* : But you must speak humbly, and be *cloathed soberly*, and accompany with the humble; And 1. this is the performance of one part of your duty ; 2. and it is the expression of your *Desires to be more humble*, and consequently of *some humility* contained in these desires ; 3. and it is the way to *work* your hearts to that humility which you want ; or the way in which you must wait on God for the receiving of it : So if you cannot overcome the *Love of the world* as you desire, do not therefore forbear *giving to the poor*, for fear of *Hypocrise* : But give the more, that you may perform so much of your duty as you can, and may the sooner overcome your worldly love. Some trees will be killed with often cropping : But if they will not, it is better that a poysorous plant should live only in the root, then sprout forth and be fruitful.

Even so, if you cannot overcome your *inward doubts*, and fears, and sorrows, as you desire, yet let them not be *fruitful*, nor cause you to walk so dejectedly before the world, as to dis-honour God and your holy profession : And if you have not the *inward comfort* you desire, expres your *desires*, and the *hopes* and *smallest comforts* that you have, to the best advantage for your Masters honour : And you will find that a holy *chearfulness* of *countenance*, expression and deportment, will at last much overcome your inordinate disquietments, and much promote the joyes which you desire. But yet that you may see cause for the *chearfulness* to which I now exhort you, I next adde.

3. If thou have but one *spark* of saving *grace*, it is not possible for thee now to conceive or express the happiness of thy state, and the cause thou hast to live a *thankful joyous life*. If thou have *no grace*, thou art not the person that I am now speaking to. If thou have *no grace*, whence is it that thou so much *desirest* it ? What is it that causeith thee to lament the want of it, and walk so heavily, but because thou art so much in doubt of it ? If thou truly *Love it*, thou *hast it*, (for it is only *grace* that causeth an *unfeigned Love of grace*). And if thou *love it not*, why canst not thou more quietly be without it ? Why dost thou make so much ado for it ? But if thou have it in the least degree, and so art born again of the spirit, thou hast with it an unspeakable *treasure of delights* : The God of Life and Love is thine : The Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ is thine : The Spirit is thine : The promises are thine : and Heaven it self is thine in title , and shall be thine in full perpetual possession. The God that made and ruleth all things, is Reconciled to thee, and is thy Father , having by grace in Christ adopted thee to be his Son ; Rom. 5. 1, 2, 10, 11. & 8. 1, 16, 17. Gal. 4. 6. 2 Cor. 6. 18. The Son of God is become thy Head , and thou art become a member of his body , as flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone , (which no man ever yet hath hated) Ephes. 5. 23, 27, 29, 30. Thou art become the Temple and residence of the Holy Ghost. Thy title to Heaven is incomparably more sure, then any mans humane title to his possessions or inheritance on earth : And what rejoicing can be too great for a man in thy condition ? O what a Life should that man live ? with what sweet delight should he be transported , that hath the Spirit of Christ now living in him, to prepare him and seal him up for an endless life with Christ ? He that shall be shortly so full of joy, should not be empty now when he remembreth what he must shortly be. Doth it beseem him now to dwell in grief, and refuse consolation , that must in a few dayes be swallowed up with Joy ? If thou thatittest here in heaviness , wert assured that shortly thou shouldest be with Christ , and made a blessed companion of Angels , and possessed of thy Masters joy , a joy that hath no bounds or end , would not thy Conscience then tell thee , that thou greatly wrongest such abundant mercy, in that thou art no more affected with it ? and that thy want of joy doth express thy too much want of thankfulness. Dost thou sit there like a child of God , and like an heir of Heaven, and a co-heire with Christ ? (Rom. 8. 16, 17.) Doth that sorrowful heart , and that dejected countenance become one that must live with Christ for ever , in such resplendent glory as thou must do ? and that hath but a few more dayes to live, till thou take possession of these endless joyes ? The Lord pardon and heal our unbelief. Did Faith more effectually play its part , as it is the evidence of things not seen, and withdraw the veil, and shew us, though but in a glas, the glory which we must see with open face , it would be wine to our hearts, and oyl to our countenances , and make our poverty , sickness and death, more comfortable then the wealth, and health, and life of the ungodly.

I know you will say still, that you could rejoice if you were sure all this were yours : but when you rather think you have no part in it, it can be but small comfort to you.

Answ.

Answ. 1. But who is it long of that you have still such fears? Have you not in your souls that *Love to Holiness*, that *desire after it*, that *hated and weariness of sin*, that *Love to the searching discovering use of the Word of God*, that *Love to the Brethren*, which are the *evidences* of your title, and to which God hath plainly promised salvation? If then you have your *Title* in the *Promise*, and your *Evidences* in your *hearts*, and yet will be still questioning whether you have them or no, and whether the *Kingdom* shall be yours, your *weakness* and *inconsiderateness* causeth your own sorrows: And when you have *sinfully bred* your *doubts*, will you insist on them to *excuse* your following *fins*?

2. Are you not *sure* that Christ and his *benefits* are yours? I am *sure* they *are* yours, or *may be* if you *will*: and nothing but your continued *refusal* can deprive you of them. For this is the very tenor of the promise: And if you will not have Christ and his offered *benefits*, why do you so *dissemble* as to take on you to mourn because you have them not? But if you are *willing*, they are yours.

Object. But (you will say) if we had *nothing* but *cause of comfort*, we could *rejoice*: but we have *cause of sorrow* also: How can we live *comfortably* under so much *sin* and *suffering*?

Answ. By this account you will *never* *rejoice* till you come to *Heaven*; for you will *never* be *free* from *sin* and *suffering* till then. Nay it seems you would have no man else *rejoice*, and so would banish all *comfort* from the *world*: For there is *no man* without *sin* and *suffering*.

But what can there be of any *weight* to prohibit a *sincere* *Believer* from *seasonable* *spiritual* *rejoicing*? Have you *sin*? It is *not* *gross* and *reigning* *sin*: And *sinful infirmities*, the *best* of the *Saints* on *earth* have had. As your *sin* must be your *moderate sorrow*; so the *pardon of it*, and the *degree of mortification* which you have attained, and the *promise* you have of *full deliverance*, should be the *matter* of your *greater joy*. Are your *Graces* *weak*? Be *humbled* in the *sense* of that your *weakness*; but *rejoice* more that they are *sincere* and will be *perfect*. Are your *afflictions* *great*? Be *humbled* under them: But *rejoice* more that they are but *Fatherly chastisements*, proceeding from *Love*, and tending to your *greater good*; and that you are *saved* from the *consuming fire*,

and shall live in everlasting rest, where affliction shall be known no more. Is it possible for that man that hath the love of God, and shall have heaven for ever, to have any sufferings that should weigh down these, and be matter to him of greater sorrow than this of joy? Can you imagine that there is more evil in your infirmities and sufferings, than there is good in God, and happiness in Heaven? Is it reason and equity that you should look at *sin* only, and not at *grace*? and at what you *want only*, and not at what you *have received*? Seeing you have more cause of joy than sorrow, should you not distribute your affections proportionably as there is cause? I dissuade you not from *seasonable moderate sorrows*: But should not *your joy* be much greater, as long as the cause of it is much greater?

4. And here I would intreat you to consider well of the tenour of Gods commands concerning this matter in the *Gospel*, and of the examples of the *Saints* there left on record: And then tell me, which course it is that God is best pleased with. Your *cheerful* or your *dejected* course of life: I find that though I pity the *sad* and *miserable*, yet I had rather my self have a *cheerful*, than a *drooping*, *grieving*, *troubled* companion and friend: Because I desire one suitable to my self in the state I *would* be in; and I *delight* in the *welfare*, and not in the *distress* and *milery* of my friend. And surely God that is *Love* it self, and hath created *Joy* in man to be his *Happiness*, and hath placed so much of *misery* in *sorrow*, can never be so delighted in our *distress* and *trouble*, as in our *content* and *joy*. As he hath sworn that he takes no pleasure in the *death* of the *wicked*, but rather that they *repent* and *live*; so we may boldly conclude that he takes no pleasure in the *anguish* and *dejection* of his *children*, but rather that they walk in *Love* and *cheerful Obedience* before him. But his *Word* will fully and plainly tell you, what temper it is that is most *pleasing* to him. It is a *light and easie burden* that Christ doth call us to bear; and it is his office to *ease* us and *give us rest* that *labour* and are *heavy laden* with *burdens* of our own. *Mat. 11. 28, 29.* He was anointed to *preach the Gospel*, or *glad tidings of salvation* to the *poor*; and sent to *heal the broken-hearted*; to *preach deliverance* to the *captives*, and *recovering* of *sight* to the *blind*, and to *set at liberty* them that are *bruised*, and to *preach the acceptable year of the Lord*, *Luke 4. 18, 19.* When he was to leave the world, how carefully did he provide for the *comfort* of his *Disciples*? Commanding them not

not to let their hearts be troubled, Joh. 14. 1. and promising to send the comforter to them, and that he would come to them, and not leave them comfortless, ver. 16, 18, 26. Repeating it again, v. 27, 28. [Peace I leave with you : my peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth give I unto you : Let not your heart be troubled, neither be afraid] Nay, he engageth them as they Love him to rejoice, even because he went unto the Father : He engageth them in the dearest Love to one another that their lives might be the more comfortable ; He foretelleth them of his sufferings and of their own, lest being surprized, their sorrow should be the more. He promiseth them that their sorrow shall be turned into joy, Joh. 16. 20. and that in him they shall have peace, when in the world they have tribulation, v. 33. directing them to prayer, and promising to bear them that their joy may be full, v. 24. and promiseth that none shall take it from them, v. 22. telling them of the mansions that he prepareth for them, and that it is his will, that they be with him, and behold his glory, that nothing might be wanting to their joy, Joh. 14. 2, 3. & 17. 23, 24. When he appeareth to them after his Resurrection, his salutation is, [Peace be unto you] Joh. 20. 19, 21, 26. The abounding and multiplying of this holy Peace, is the desire and salutation of Paul to the Churches in all his epistles, Gal. 6. 16. Ephes. 6. 23. Rom. 15. 33. 1 Cor. 1. 3. Rom. 1. 7. Gal. 1. 3. Pbil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 2 Thes. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. Tit. 1. 4. Philem. 3. So Peter 1 Pet. 1. 2. & 2. 1, 2. & 2 Joh. 3. & 3 Joh. 14. The Gospel it self is a message of glad tidings Luk. 8. 1. Act. 13. 32. And it is the work of the ministers of Christ, to preach Peace to the sinful world through him, Act. 10. 36. and to beseech them to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. and to bring Peace to the houses where any of the sons of Peace abide, Matth. 10. 12, 13. Luk. 10. 6. Triumphant joys and proclamations of Peace were the entrance of Christ's Kingdom : This Angels proclaim, Luk. 2. 14. [Glory be to God in the highest : on Earth Peace : Good will towards men] This the new inspired Disciples proclaim, Luk. 19. 37, 38. [The whole multitude of the Disciples began to rejoice, and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord : Peace in heaven, and Glory in the Highest] what abundance of commands for Rejoycing are in the Scripture ? Psal. 31. 1. [Rejoyce

joyce in the Lord O ye righteous : for praise is comely for the upright. Psal. 97. 11, 12. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in hearts. Rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness] 1 Thes. 5. 16. Rejoyce evermore. Phil. 3. 1. Finally my Brethren, Rejoyce in the Lord ; Phil. 4. 4. Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again I say Rejoyce. 6. Be careful for nothing : but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God] And thus are the godly ordinarily described, even in their deepest sufferings and distrels, Rom. 5. 1, 2. Being justified by faith we have peace with God — and rejoice in hope of the glory of God : And not only so, but we glory in tribulation —] Phil. 3. 3. It is the description of a regenerate man [to worship God in spirit : to rejoice in Christ Jesus : to have no confidence in the flesh] 1 Pet. 1. 6, 8. It is the description of believers [to Rejoyce greatly in a Christ not seen, even with joy unspeakable and full of glory : though for a season if need be, they may be in heaviness through manifold temptations, 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13, 14. even in the fiery tryal we must rejoice, as being partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy] when all manner of evil is spoken of us falsely, for the sake of Christ, and when we are hated of all men and reproached, we must rejoice and be exceeding glad, and leap for joy, as knowing that our reward in heaven is great, Luk. 6. 22, 23. Math. 5. 11, 12. The Apostles were [as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing : as having nothing, and yet possessing all things] 2 Cor. 6. 10. rejoicing in their suffering for believers, Col. 1. 24. even when they were beaten, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, Act. 5. 39, 40. The rich must Rejoyce in that he is made low, as well as the brother of low degree in that he is exalted, Jam. 2. 9, 10. The Eunuch when he was but newly converted, [went on his way rejoicing] Act. 8. 39. There was great joy in Samaria when they had received the word of God, Act. 8. 8. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. The statutes of God are the rejoicing of their hearts, Psal. 119. 111. & 19. 8. All those that trust in God should rejoice, and shout for joy, and all that love his name should be joyful in him, Psal. 5. 11. & 33. 21. [Let the righteous be glad : let them rejoice before God, yea let them exceedingly rejoice, Psal. 68. 3. Let us therefore de-

fire [to see the good of his chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and glory with his inheritance, Psal. 106. 5. [Sing unto the Lord : sing Psalms unto him : talk of all his wondrous works :] Glory ye in his holy name : let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord] Psal. 105: 1, 2, 3. The Saints shall shout aloud for joy, Psal. 132. 9, 16. [Be glad in the Lord, O ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart] Psal. 32. 11. [Behold my servants shall rejoice ; but ye shall be ashamed : Behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart : but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit, Isa. 65. 13, 14.]

Abundance such passages tell you what manner of persons it is that God delighteth in, and what he would have you be and do. These I have recited to shame the godly out of their undecent troubles and dejectedness ; as you would shew a child his face in a glass when he eryeth, that he may see how he deformeth it. The very Kingdom of God consisteth in righteousness, and Peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. If you would live as is most pleasing unto God, and as becometh those that are indeed believers, let the joy of believers be (as far as is possible) your ordinary frame : And if by sin you wound your souls, and bring smart upon your selves, dwell not in that wounded smarting state ; but go to your Physicians, and beg of God that he will restore to you the joy of his salvation, and make you to bear the voice of joy and gladness, that your broken heart and bones may rejoice, Psa. 51. 8, 12.

And take notice throughout all the Scripture, whether you find the servants of God so much complaining of their want of assurance, and of their frequent doubtings of their own sincerity and his love. I think you will find this a very rare thing in the ancient Saints. They were sensible of sin as well as we ; and they were as sensible of Gods afflicting hand, and oft. (as Job, David, Hezekiah, &c.) complained under it, perhaps with some excels, and too much questioning Gods favour to them as if he had forsaken them. But (besides and without any such affliction) to live in ordinary trouble of mind through the doubting of their sincerity, and of Gods special love, and to be exercised in the complaining and disconsolate way as now abundance of Christians are, this I find little of the Scripture Saints. The reason was not because they had more holiness and less sin than many that now are thus cast down : For the Gospel

time excelleth theirs in degrees of grace ; and I think the greater care that Christians have of their hearts, and of inward rectitude, and communion with God, and their fuller apprehensions of the life to come, and so of their greatest hopes and dangers, is one great cause. But yet there are worse concurring causes. The Love of God, and his readiness to shew mercy, should not be more questioned now, when it is so abundantly revealed by Christ, than it was in times of darker revelation. The servants of God did formerly conceive, that nothing but sin could make man miserable ; and therefore when they had sinned, they repented ; and instead of continuing doubts and fears, they bent their resolusions against their sins ; and having cast away their gross and wilful sins, and continuing the conflict against their unavoidable infirmities, which they hated, they knew that the door of mercy was still open to them ; and that if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, who is the propitiation. The time that is now spent in doubting and complaining, and asking How shall I know that I sincerely repent, was then spent in Repenting, and reforming, and using the means that God hath appointed for the conquering of sin ; and then trusting to his grace and Covenant in the blood of Christ for pardon. And it would be better with us if we did thus. Judge now by all these Scriptures, and by the course of former Saints, how God would have you behave yourselves. Do you not read an hundred times of their joy, and thanks, and praising God, and calling upon others to praise him, for once that they perplexedly question their sincerity ?

But perhaps you'll say, that your strength is so weak, and your sins and enemies so strong, and all your duty so imperfect and unworthy, that having such continual cause of trouble, you cannot choose but walk in heaviness, and in fears.

I answer you, 1. But why do you not tell what you have, as well as what you want ? Have you not greater cause to say [My sins being mortified at the root, and all forgiven, and my soul renewed, and reconciled unto God, and I being made an heir of Heaven, how can I choose but live in joy ?]

2. Are you heartily willing to forsake your sins, and overcome the things of which you so complain ? or are you not ? If you are not, why do you complain of them ? and why will you not consent to let them go ? and use Gods means to overcome

come them? If you are willing, then they are but your pardoned infirmities; For that's the difference between infirmities and reigning sins: [Whatsoever sin consisteth with a greater Habitual willingness to avoid that and all other sin, then to keep them, is but an Infirmity] for it stands with present saving grace, and is always Habitually or virtually repented of, and actually, when grace, by knowledge and consideration, hath opportunity and advantage to produce the act.

3. And when once you are truly ingrafted into Christ, he is your worthiness, and your righteousness, and the treasury of your souls; and what you want in your own possession, you have in his hands; and as what you have is but his gift, so what you want he is able and ready to supply. Look not too much to your selves, as if your safety and happiness were principally in your own hand. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his son. He that bath the son, bath life, 1 Job. 5. 10, 11. It is through him that we can do all things, so far as he strengtheneth us: and without him we can do nothing. Make use of him therefore as the Lord of life, and joyfully acknowledge all that you receive, and stand not dejectedly lamenting that you need him. If you would have the waters of life, goe to the fountain, and do not sit down and fruitlessly vex your selves with complaining of your wants, instead of seeking for supplyes. Is there not an allsufficient Physician of souls at hand? Dost he not freely offer you his help? what though you are not suddenly cured? wounds may be caused in an hour, but they use not to be cured in an hour. Stay his time, and use his remedies, and cheerfully trust him, and you shall find the cure successfully; go on, though it will not be finished till death.

I. C. Scaliger Epidorp. l. 7. p. 296.
*Nos quod Valeo; Non quo quod debeo: Quid tū:
 Mensura mea, tu Domine, immensa potestas:—
 Non ego tua: Quodq; habeo, tu mibi dedit:—
 Quodq; do, non do, sed accipis; hoc enim dedit:—
 Tu solus tibi satis es: tu mibi, tibiq;
 Nec te laudo, ubi laudo: sed ipse te ipse laudo
 Me persiciens, non tua, sic laudibus ornans:—
 Quis me ad tetharin: haud ego te trabo super me:—
 Me præveniens hic ades: ut mibi superfis.*

3. Consider also, that it must needs be the best and most desirable life, which is likest to our life in Heaven. And therefore as Heaven is a state of Joy, so Joy is the highest and best condition on earth. He is the best and happiest man, that is likest to the glorified Saints and Angels; And judge your selves whether a dejected

or a rejoicing Christian be liker to these inhabitants of Heaven?

Object. But (you will say) by that rule we should not mourn at all; (for they do not;) Whereas God delighteth in the contrite soul, and Christ blesseth mourners and weepers.

Ans. 1. Your resemblance of the Saints in Heaven, must be proportionable in *all the parts*. You must labour first to be as like them as you can in *Holiness*, and then in *Joy*. If you could be as far from *sin* as they, you need not mourn at all. But because you cannot, you must have moderate, regular sorrows and humiliation, while you have *sin*. But yet withall you must endeavour to imitate the heavenly Joyes, according to the measure of your Grace received.

2. And it is such a regular contrition, consisting in humble thoughts of our selves, and tending to restore us from our falls and sorrows, unto our integrity and joy, which God delighteth in: And it is such mourners as these, and such as suffer for righteousness sake from men, that Christ pronounceth blessed: But the inordinate troubles of the soul, that exclude a holy delight in God, though he pardon, yet he never doth encourage.

6. Consider also, that a great part of your Religion, yea and the most high and excellent part, doth consist in the causes, form and effects of this holy joy and cheerfulness. 1. As to the causes of it, they are such as in themselves are requisite to the very being of the new creature. *Faith* and *Love*, which are the Head and Heart of sanctifying grace, are the causes of our spiritual joy. An unwilling, heavy, forced obedience, may proceed from mere *Fears*, and thus will not prove an upright heart. But when once we Believe Everlasting Glory, and Love Christ as our Saviour, and the Father as our Father and felicity, and Love a holy frame of heart and life, as the image of God and that which pleaueth him, then our obedience will be cheerful and delightful, unless accidentally we trouble our selves by our own mistakes. If you can truly make God and his will and service your *Delight*, you may be sure you *Love him*, and are *beloved by him*, as being past the state of slavish fear.

2. And I have shewed you that Joy in the *Holy Ghost* is it self one part of that grace in which Gods Kingdom doth consist; Though not such a part as a Christian cannot possibly be without.

out, yet such as is exceeding suitable to his state, and necessary to his more happy being.

3. And without this holy Delight and Joy, you will deny God a principal part of his service. How can you be thankful for the great mercies of your Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, and all the special graces you have received, or for your hopes of Heaven it self, as long as you are still doubting whether any of these mercies are yours or not, and almost ready to say that you never received them? Nay you will be less thankful for your health, and life, and food, and wealth, and all common mercies, as doubting lest they will prove but aggravations of your sin and misery. And for the great and excellent work of Praise which should be your daily sacrifice, but specially the work of each Lord's day, how unfit is a doubting, drooping, distressed soul for the performance of it? You stifle holy Love within you, and stop your mouthes when they should be speaking and singing the praises of the Lord, and disable your selves from the most high, and sweet, and acceptable part of all God's service, by your unwarrantable thoughts and self-delusions. And when all these are laid aside, how poor and lean a service is it, that is left you to perform to him? Even a few tears, and complaints, and prayers, which I know God will mercifully accept, because even in your desires after him there is ~~Love~~, but yet it is far short of the service which you might perform. Nay, your Heavenly-mindedness will be much sappied, as long as you are sadly questioning whether ever you shall come thither, and it will be yours or not.

7. Are you not ashamed to see the servants of the Devil and the world so jocund, and your selves so sad that serve the Lord? Will you go mourning so inordinately to Heaven, when others go so merrily to Hell? Will you credit Satan and Sin so much, as to persuade me by your practice, that sin affordeth more pleasure and content than Holiness?

8. You could live merrily gainst selves before your Conversion, while you served sin. And will you walk so delightedly now you have repented of it? As if you had changed for the worse. It would make men think so? I know you would not for all the world be what you were before your change. Why then do you live as if you were more miserable then before?

9. You would be loth so long to resist the sanctifying work of the Spirit : And why should you not be loth to resist its comforting work ? It is the same Holy Ghost that you resist in both : Nay you dare not so open your mouthes for wickedness, and plead against Sanctification it self, as you open them on the behalf of your sinful doubtings, and plead for your immoderate dejections. If you should, how vile would you appear ?

10. Lastly consider, that God will lay sufferings now upon you for your sins, and suffer wicked men to lay now on you for well doing, and you need not lay more upon your selves. You have need to use all means for strength to bear the burdens that you must undergo : and it is the joy of the Lord, and the hopes of Glory that are your strength. And will you cast away the only supports of your soul, and sink when the day of suffering comes ? How will you bear poverty, or reproach, or injuries ? how will you meet approaching death, if you feed your doubts of your salvation and of the Love of God in Christ, which must corroborate you ? O weaken not your souls that are too weak already : Weaken not your souls that have so much to do and suffer : and that of so great necessity and importance. While you complain of your weakness, encrease it not by unbelieving uncomfortable complaints. Gratisfie not the Devil and wicked malicious men so far, as to inflict on your selves a greater calamity then all their malice and power could inflict. It is a madness in them that will please the Devil, to the displeasing of God, though the pleasing of their own flesh be it that moveth them to it. But for a man to please the Devil, and displease God, even when he displeaseth his own flesh by it also, and bringeth nothing but sorrow to himself by it, this is in some respects more unreasonable then madness it self. Many cast away their souls for Riches, and Honours, and carnal accommodations ; but who would do it for poverty, sickness, or disgrace ? So though many undo their souls for fleshly pleasures and delights ; yet he is a strange man indeed that will offend God even for self-tormenting griefs and sorrows. O therefore dear Christians, as you have let go all your sensual pleasures for the pleasing of your Lord, do not let go the pleasures of his love, for which you have let go all. The Lord taketh pleasure in his people, even in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy, and the meek he will beautifie with salvation, Psalm 34.7. It is meet therefore that

that his people take pleasure in the Lord : that the *Saints be joyful in glory ; that they sing aloud upon their beds, and that the high praises of God be in their mouths*, Psalm 149. 4,5,6.

O let not the *Spirit of God* be thought to be like the *evil spirit* that vexed *Saul*, that filled his mind with melancholy anguish and confusion ; It is the *evil spirit* that renteth and tormenteth those that it possesseth ; though the *spirit of God* doth humble, and by ordinary sorrow prepare for joy : But its proper work is to *sanctifie, and to comfort, and to establish* the Believer with *Peace* that *passeth understanding*. As it is a greater sign of the operation of the *Spirit of Christ*, to restore the lapsed by a *spirit of meekness, and to bear one anothers burdens, and exercise tenderness, compassion and charity, then to censure and envy, and call for fire from heaven* : So even at home (though there we are allowed to be more rigid and censorious) it is a more sure and satisfactory discovery of the *Spirit of Grace* within us, if we are raised to a sweet *delight* in God, and quieted in his *Love*, and carried out in cheerful obedience, thankfully acknowledging the grace that we have received, and waiting in the use of means for more, then if we are only *turmoiled and troubled* in our minds, and tossed up and down with *unprofitable griefs and fears*, that *abuse our Love to God, and our holy joyes*. It is the *still voice* that doth most fully acquaint us that it is *Christ the Prince of Peace* that speaketh to us : Though at first when he findeth a sinner in a state of enmity and rebellion, he often useth to thunder and lighten, and calleth him as to *Saul*, [*Why persecutest thou me ?*] *Wilt thou kick against the prickes ? Wilt thou fight against heaven ? Or canst thou bear the wrath of God Almighty ?* Yet to the *humbled penitent soul*, there is none in all the world so tender as *Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, the Churches husband, that cherisheth them as his own flesh*. O that you did but know the greatness and tenderness of his *love to you*, while you lie trembling under the unjust apprehensions of his *wrath* ! It would then so transport you with ravishing delights, that the world would see that the *Saints of the most High* have *higher Pleasures* then the world affordeth.

But

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But I know you will say, [*Alas, what need you exhort us to spiritual pleasures and consolations? Do you think there is any man in love with sorrows? or unwilling to live a joyful life? O that you could tell us how we might attain it; and you should quickly see that we are willing.*]

Ans. And if you are so willing to attain it, as to be also willing to use the means, you shall quickly see that I shall certainly inform you how you may attain it; and how you may come to find a life of Holiness to be the most sweet and pleasant life, I therefore desire and require you to practise these Directions following.

Direct. I. Make it your first and principal business to attain the fullest fixed knowledge of God in his Attributes, and Covenant-Relations to you.

I. Study him in his *Attributes*. If infinite Goodness take not up the soul with Love and with Delight, it is because it is not known. Where there is all things that the soul of man desires to its highest felicity and content, and yet contentment and delight is wanting, it must needs be ignorance and distance that is the cause. If the Sun seem not light to you, it is because you have not eye-sight, or look not on the light. If you find no pleasure in the most pleasant food, it is because your appetites are diseased, or you do not taste it. If your most suitable and most affectionate friend seem not amiable to you, it is because you know not his suitableness and love. So if the eternal God, that is infinitely powerful, wise and good, most perfect and most suitable to your highest affections, do not possess you with abundant pleasures and Delights of Love; it is because you are unacquainted with him. Study then his infinite perfections: and be much with him in secret prayer and meditation, where the retired soul having fewest avocations, is fittest for the most sweet familiar converse. And still remember that it is *Love* it self that you have to do with. For God is *Love*. It is the fountain of all delights and pleasures that you draw near to. It is a cold heart indeed that fire it self cannot warm: and a dead heart indeed that life it self cannot revive: Conceive of God as God, and you will delight in him: Abhorr all unworthy diminutive thoughts.

thoughts of him : Set up his Love and Goodness in your estimation, as infinitely above all the creatures. Believe it, the Love of your dearest friends, is an inconsiderable drop to the Ocean of his Love. Think not of him as cruel, or an enemy, if you would love him, or delight in him. Love and Delight are never forced by bare commands and threatenings, but drawn forth magnetically by attractive Goodness. Were not God most amiable, and friendly, and desireable to us, it is not saying, [*Love me, or I will damn thee,*] that would ever have caused man to love him; but rather to fear, and hate, and fly from him. Think but of Gods Love, and Goodness, and Fidelity, as you do of his Power, and then you will find that there are rivers of pleasure in his presence, and fullness of joy at his right hand, the fore-tastes whereof are the only delights that can quiet the troubled thirsty soul.

2. And if you say, [*What is all this to me, any more then to the ungodly world, on whom the wrath of God abideth?*] I answer, Thou art in Covenant with him, and he is thine in the Covenant Relations, even thy Reconciled Father, thy Saviour and thy Sanctifier. No husband is so inviolably bound to a wife, nor will so faithfully answer his Relation, as the blessed Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier unto thee. Didst thou well know and consider, what it is to have God himself to be thine in Covenant, to all these uses, and to all the ends that thou canst reasonably desire, it would fill up thy soul with satisfying delights:

There is nothing that thou wantest, but what belongs to God to give thee, in one of these three great relations. And sooner shall the day be turned into night, and the frame of nature be dissolved, then God will violate his Covenant of Grace. *Jer. 33. 20, 21.* [*Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my Covenant of the day, and my Covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season: then may also my Covenant be broken, &c.*] *Isa. 54. 4, 5, &c.* [*Fear not: for thou shalt not be ashamed; &c. For thy Maker is thy Husband: (the Lord of Hosts is his name) and thy Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall be called: For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when when thou wast refused, saith thy God: For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with ever-*

Lasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth: So have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee: For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.] And though yet we have our troublsom imperfections, it belongeth to our God, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, to make us perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, that to him may be the glory for ever, Heb. 13. 20, 21. It is his work [to comfort all that mourn; to appoint to them that mourn in Zion, and to give them beauty for ashes, the oyl of joy for mourning, the garments of praise, for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified — They shall be named The Priests of the Lord; men shall call them The ministers of our God — Everlasting joy shall be unto them — For the Lord will direct their work in truth, and make an everlasting Covenant with them — All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed whom the Lord hath blessed: Therefore should we greatly rejoice in the Lord; and our souls should be joyful in our God: For he hath cloathed us with the garments of salvation; he hath covered us with the robes of righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her Jewels.) Isa. 61. [A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put into you; and I will take away the stony hearts out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements and do them — and I will save you from all your uncleanness, &c.] Erek. 36. 25, 26, 27, 29. [And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them; and I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me: Then I will rejoice over them to do them good, &c. Jer. 32. 38, 39, 40, 41. [Happy are the people that

that are in such a case ; yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord, Psal. 144. 15.

Nature doth not give you such security that the Sun shall shine, and that the streams shall run, that the earth shall be fruitful, as the covenant of the Lord doth give you of all that is necessary to you Happiness. Study therefore the mercies and riches of the Covenant.

Dir. 2. Understand and remember that it is your Covenant-consent, that it is the condition of your title to all the following blessings of the Covenants.]

I add this as supposing you will say [What are all these benefits to me, unless I were sure that I were indeed in the Covenant ?] It is not your merit, but your consent that is required : God offereth himself to be your Reconciled Father, and Christ to be your saviour, and the Holy Spirit to be your sanctifier. Do you consent to this, or not ? All the question is whether you are willing ? and whether your sin be not so sweet to you, that you will rather venture your souls on the wrath of God, then you will be saved from it. If you heartily consent, assuredly you are in the Covenant, and the benefits are yours ; and therefore the Joy and comfort should be yours. If you do not consent ; instead of despairing, presently consent ; and refuse not your happiness, while you lament your misery.

Object. But it is not only Covenant-making, but Covenant-keeping that must save us : and I have break my Covenant, and therefore have no title to the benefits. Answ. What Covenants have you broken ? This Covenant in question that engageth you to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ? If you have broken this, you have withdrawn your Consent : For while you heartily consent, you break it not in any essential part. As it is not every breach of the Laws, that makes a man a traitor or rebel, nor every fault or falling out between husband and wife that dissolveth their relation ; so is it not every sin, nor any that is consistent with true consent to the terms of the Covenant, that is a Covenant-breaking forfeiture of the benefits. If you would not have God to be your Portion, your Father, your Saviour, and your Sanctifier, you are then Covenant-breakers ; And if you be so, Consent yet, and return to your fidelity, and the comforts of the Covenant may yet be yours, for all your former violation.

Dir. 3. Moreover, if you would find the Pleasure of a Holy life, see that the flesh befool you not into an over-high estimation of any worldly thing: that so your appetites may not be corrupted with such contrary unwholsome Pleasures, nor your hearts be overwhelmed with worldly cares, or griefs or troubles. If you will glut your selves with other kind of pleasures, you cannot expect that Holiness should be your pleasure. You cannot find your delight in God, when you turn from him to seek it in the creature. If you sought for less in friends, and health, and prosperity in the world, you might have more in God. How should you find content in God, when you set so light by him, that the promise of beholding him in endless glory, will not please you, unless you may also have your fleshly desires, or selfish inclinations pleased here? This is it that perverteth your judgements and affections, and causeth you to injure God and your selves. You first fancie that it is an excellent thing to be Rich and Renowned and to rule over others, or to have plenty of all accommodations for your flesh: and then because God saith not these carnal fancies, you think he neglecteth you, or deals hardly with you! As if every person in the Town should murmur because they are not Bayliffs or Justices; when if they had the wit to know it, they are but kept from a double encumberance, and from a burden which perhaps would break their backs. When the people are thus befooled by the flesh into brutish conceits of the nature of felicity, and into an over-valuing of these worldly things, they are then always either tickled by deluding pleasures, or troubled for the crossing of their carnal wills, so that they grow out of relish and liking with the true and durable delights. Take heed therefore of this carnality.

Dir. 4. Study the greatness of the mercy which you have received: You abound with mercies; and yet undervalue them, and over look them, and sweeten not your souls with the serious observation and remembrance of them: you study principally your afflictions and your wants: And thus when you live in a land that flowerth with milke and honey, you will not feed on the prepared feast, but keep still the gall and wormwood in your mouths; and how then should you be acquainted with the pleasures of a holy life.

Yea you must use to look more to the spiritual part of all your mercies

mercies ; and see the love of God that appeareth in them ; and taste the blood of Christ in them ; and loe not the *kernel* : and take not up with the common carnal part, which every wicked man can value and enjoy. Consider in all your mercies, what there is in them for the benefit of your *souls*, much rather then how they accommodate your *flesh*. Could you do thus, you would find the benefit of *afflictions* ; and that the *denial* of what you have accounted your necessary mercies, is not the smallest of your mercies. And thus judging truly by the spirit, and not by the flesh, there is no condition (except that of sin) in which you might not find cause of joy.

Dir. 5. Take heed of sinning : Keep still upon your watch against temptation ; *sin* is the cause of all your sufferings ; when it promiseth you delight, it is preparing for your sorrow ; when it flattereth you into *presumption*, it is preparing for *despair* ; when it promiseth you *secrecie* and *security*, it prepareth for your *shame* : and be sure your *sin* will find you out, Numb. 32. 23. If therefore you have offended, delay not your *Repentance* ; and spare not the *flesh* in your return ; but (unless the honour of God forbid it) take *shame* to your selves by free confession, and make the fullest reparation of the injury that you can to God and man. If you would thus get out the thorn that vexeth you, the ways of God would be more pleasant.

Dir. 6. Daily live in the exercise of faith, upon the everlasting pleasures : Dwell as at the gates of *Heaven* ; as men that are waiting every hour when they are called in, and when death will draw aside the *vaile*, and shew them the blessed face of God. And take heed that the *enmity* of *interposing Death*, prevail not against the *Joys* of *faith*. But look to Christ that *hath conquered* it, and *will conquer* it for you ; And if thus you could live as *strangers* here, and as the *Citizens* of *Heaven*, that are ready to step into the *immortal pleasures*, you would then taste the *Pleasures* of a *holy life*, in the *first fruits* and *foretastes* thereof. It is *your Treasure* that must *Delight* you ; As *your Heart* must be *there*, so *your pleasure* must be derived thence. *Strangers* to *Heaven* will be *strangers* to the *Believers* *joys* ; As the *pleasure* of the *Carnal world*, consisteth in the *sense* of what they have in *hand* ; so the *pleasure* of *Believers* consisteth in the *fore-apprehensions* of what they shall *enjoy* with *God* for ever. If

therefore you exercise not those apprehensions ; if you look not frequently, seriously, and believingly into the world that you must live in for ever, how can the comforts of that world illustrate and refresh you in this present world ? The *Light* and *Heat*, which is the *Beauty* and *Life* of this *lower world*, proceedeth not from any thing in this world, but from the *Sun* which is so far above us, and sends down hither its quickning influence and rays. They are not the genuine comforts of Christianity, which are not fetcht from the world above.

Dir. 7. If you would have the experience of the *Pleasures* of a life of *Faith* and *Holiness*, neither *desire* nor *cherish* any *fears* or *sorrows*, but such as are subservient to *Faith*, and *Hope*, and *Love*, and preparatory to *Thankfulness* and *Joy*. Think not Religion consisteth in any other kind of sorrows. Nay if any other should assault you, be so far from taking them for your duty or religion, as to resist them, and lament them as your sin. That is true and saving *Humiliation*, 1. which makes you vile in your own eyes, and loath your selves for sin. 2. And maketh you more desirous to be delivered and cleansed from your sin, than to live in it, how sweet or gainful soever it may seem, and 3. which maketh you set more by a *Saviour* to deliver you, than by all the *pleasures*, *riches*, and *honours* of the world. What ever want of *Grief* or *sorrows* you find, if you have these signs, your *Repentance* and *humiliation* is sincere. Do not therefore refuse your *Peace* because you have not greater *sorrows* ; nor disturb your souls by strugling for excessive sorrow : Take not part with them, but do your best to cast them out, if they are such as would *destroy* your *Love* and *Joy*, and drive you from Christ, and hinder your *Thanksgivings*. Know that the *Life* of your Religion consisteth in the *Holy Love* of God and of his Image and servants and holy ways. *Love* is your duty and your felicity and reward : Therefore let all tend to the exercise of *Love*, and value most those means which most promote it ; and think your selves best when you abound most in *Love* ; and not when you are overwhelmed with those *Fears* and *Griefs* which hinder *Love*. Study therefore above all, the *Love* of God revealed in Christ, which is the best attractive of your *Love to him* : and here all suggestions which would represent God unlovely and undesirable to you.

Dir. 8. Use cheerful company: Not carnal, but holy; nor such as waste their time in unprofitable frothy speeches, or filthy, or profane or scornful jestings: But such as have most of the sense of Love and mercy on their hearts; and are best acquainted with a *Life of Faith*, and whose speeches and cheerful conversations, do most lively manifest their sense of the Love of God, and of the Grace of Christ, and the eternal happiness of the Saints. There is a delightful and encouraging virtue in the converse of joyful, thankful, heavenly believers: Use it therefore if you can have it.

Dir. 9. In your addresses to God in holy worship, be sure that *Praise* and *Thanksgiving* have its due proportion. They are the chief and most excellent and acceptable part, and therefore let them not have the smallest room. Though your sins and wants be as great as you imagine in your complaints, it is yet your duty to Praise the Excellencies and Attributes and works of your Creator, and to be Thankful for the preparations made by Christ, and freely offered you, so that they shall certainly be yours, if you accept them. But much more Thankful should you be that have but the evidence of *Desire* and *Consent* to prove your Interest in Christ and in his Covenant.

I would intreat poor troubled, fearful souls to Resolve upon this one thing, which is *reasonable, necessary* and in their power, that when they are upon their knees with God, they *will spend as much of their Time and words in confessing mercies and Praising God, as in confessing sin, and condemning themselves and lamenting their wants, and weaknesses, and distress*. Though they cannot do it cheerfully as they should, let them do it as they can. And at last while they keep in the right way of duty, and use themselves to the commemoration of that which is sweet and grateful to the soul, Religion it self will become sweet and grateful; and cheerfulness of heart will be promoted by our own considerations & expressions.

The same I desire of them as to their Thoughts; that they *will do their best to spend as many thoughts and as much time upon Mercy as upon sin and misery; and upon the Goodness, and Love of God in Christ, as upon his threatenings and terrors.*

Dir. 10. If you would taste the comforts of a holy life, be sure that you give up your selves to Christ without reserve, and follow him fully, and place all your hopes and confidence in his

promised rewards : Serve him with your *best*, yea with your *all* ; and not with some cheap and heartless service. Comforts are the Rewards of faithfulness : They that do God the most sincere and costly service, and save nothing from him which he calleth them to lose, are likeliest to be encouraged by his sweetest comforts. It is sluggish neglects, and unfruitfulness, doing no good in the world, but thinking to be saved by a dull profession ; that makes so many uncomfortable professors as there be : Though I know that on the other extream, too many live in pining sadness, by not understanding the Covenant of Grace, which accepteth of sincerity, and secureth the weak and infants in the family of Christ. But yet the barren unprofitable Christians (I mean that comparatively are such, though they be sincere) shall find that God will not encourage any in sloathfulness by his smiles and consolations.

Direct. 11. If you would know the Rest and Comfort of Believers, see that you Rest in the Will of God in all Conditions, as the Center and only bottom for your souls. His will is not to be reduced to yours : strive therefore to bring yours most fully and quietly to his. Gods Will is the Universal Original and End of all things, and there is no Felicity or Rest for man, but in the fulfilling, and pleasing and disposals of *his will*. Be not too desirous of the fulfilling of your own wills, and murmur not against the disposals of the Will of God. It cannot but be *Good* which proceedeth from that will which is the *Spring of good*. The accomplishment of Gods Will, is the perfection of all created beings, being that End for which they are all created. If you *Rest* in your *own wills*, your *Rest* will be imperfect, disturbed and short of duration ; For *your wills* are the wills of weak and vicious men : They are frequently misguided by an ignorant mind, and perverted by a corrupt and byassed heart : But *Gods will* is never misguided ; nor ever determined of any thing but for the best. If you Rest here, you Rest in safety ; you may be sure you shall never be deceived by him : You may Rest in constant peace and quietness ; for God is unchangeable, and will not be off and on with us, as we are with him, and with our selves. As you pray that *his Will may be done*, acquiesce in the doing of his Will ; and whatever befall you, repose and satisfie your hearts in this.

Direct. 12. Lastly, I might add, that when you have all the Directions that can be given, you trust not too much to your own understanding and skill for the application of them to yourselves, in any mighty difficult cases. But as you will not think it enough for the health of your bodies, to have Physick Books and Physick Lectures, unless you have also a Physician who knoweth more than you, to direct you in the application; so think it not enough that you have the best Books and Sermons, unless you have also a faithful and judicious Pastor, whose advice you may crave in particular difficulties, and who may direct you in the discovery of your own diseases, and applying the fittest remedies in their seasons and measures, with such Rules and Cautions as are necessary to the success. If God had not known that there would still be many children and weak ones in his family, that would stand in need of the instruction, support and encouragement of the strong, he would never have settled Pastors in his Church to watch over all the flocks, and to be always ready at hand, for the confirmation and encouragement of such as need their help. There had been no Physicians, if there had been no diseases. Tire not your Physicians with needless consultations, for easie and ordinary cases: but be not without them in your greater straits, and wants, and doubts. And [blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God: For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings, which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.] 2 Cor. 1. 4, 5, 6. While you are sick or infants, the stronger must support you. You cannot stand, or go, or suffer of yourselves: And God is so tender of his weak and little ones, that he hath not only given strength to others for their sakes, and commanded the strong to bear the burdens and infirmities of the weak, Gal. 6. 1, 2. Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4. but also established the Ministerial office much for this end. Mal. 2. 7: For the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

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Not that we should disclose our Confidences, and depend for guidance on every ignorant or ungodly man, that hath the name and place of a Priest; Even among the Papists, men have leave to choose such Confessors as are fittest for them. If the Priests [depart out of the way, and cause many to stumble at the Law, and corrupt the Covenant of Levi, the Lord will make them contemptible and base before all the people, according as they have not kept his ways, but been partial in the Law.] Mat. 2. 8, 9. But use those that are qualified and sent by the Spirit of God; who [in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the Grace of God, have had their conversation in the world, especially to yourselves.] 2 Cor. 1. 12. Such as [you have acknowledged in part, that they are your rejoicing, as you also are theirs in the day of the Lord Jesus. vers. 14.] Not using them as such as have dominion over your faith, but as those that by office, qualification, and willingness and disposition are *Helpers of your joy.* vers. 24.

In the faithful practice of these Directions, you will find that *Holiness is the most Pleasant way;* and that the *Godly choose the better part;* and that the ungodly sensualists do live as *BRUTES,* while they unrealomably refuse to live as *SAINTS.*

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